

'SIN AND FORGIVENESS

IN THE

JOHANNINE WRITINGS'.

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SIN AND FORGIVENESS IN THE JOHANNINE WRITINGS.

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IV. SUMMARY.

Chapter 1. Introductory.

1. THE SUBJECT OF THE INVESTIGATION.

The Message of the Forgiveness of human sin and of reconciliation with God is one of the central themes of the Christian Proclamation. It may even be said that it is the greatest theme. In the Synoptic Gospels one sees Jesus forgiving sin and suggesting that the reason for his coming is that He might do that. The Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles have the theme of forgiveness on almost every page.

It is strange therefore to find that when one turns to the Johannine writings the express terms for forgiveness are used little or not at all. E. F. Scott has stated 'Whilst the Synoptics and Paul emphasise the relation of Jesus to sin and forgiveness, in John this side almost disappears. Jesus keeps aloof from the sinful world. The saving work does not consist in deliverance from sin'. (The Fourth Gospel). And again 'The doctrine of sin in the sense that it meets us elsewhere in the New Testament is almost wholly absent from the Fourth Gospel and is recognised only by passing allusion'. (ibid).

Is this difference real or only superficial? It must be admitted that the word 'forgive' or 'forgiveness' does not occur at all in the Fourth Gospel although there is one reference to the 'remission of sins' (John xx.23). In the Johannine Epistles the word for 'forgive' occurs twice. Even if this paucity of actual reference is acknowledged it does amount to more than 'passing allusion'. The word about 'remission of sins' is spoken in a command that it is to be part of the mission of the Church and the references in the First Epistle are very definite. Nevertheless we are faced with the comparatively small place that forgiveness has in the Johannine vocabulary.

On the other hand Paul himself only uses the basic phrase *ἀφ᾽ ἑαυτῶν τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν* on two occasions (Col.i. 14. Eph.i.7) although he uses such other words as 'reconciliation'. A comparison of the use of the relevant words in the Synoptics and Paul is not without interest as follows:-

	Matt.	Mk.	Lk.	Paul.	John Gospel.	John Epistles.
ἁμαρτία ἁμαρτυμα	9.	8.	12.	74.	20.	23.
ἄφεσις ἀφίημι	17.	10.	17.	3.	1.	2.
παράβασις	2.	0.	1.	5.	0.	2.
παράπτωμα	3.	2.	0.	3.	0.	0.
μετένοια	7.	3.	14.	7.	0.	0.

It is difficult to deduce anything very significant from the above table except that Paul uses ἁμαρτία more than anyone else and that μετένοια has no place in the Johannine writings. The comparison in the use of ἄφεσις and ἀφίημι in the Synoptics and John is the most striking feature of the vocabulary and this gives some weight to the judgment of E. F. Scott.

It must be remembered however that we are not merely tracing the occurrence of particular words. The Forgiveness of Sins is an experience which is not bound up with the use of one particular word. If the word is not used it is quite possible that the 'thing' for which the word stands might be there. This must be the line of our enquiry. We cannot assume that in writings which have always been regarded as amongst the greatest of the New Testament the major theme of Forgiveness finds no place. A superficial reading of the Gospel suggests an emphasis which is not the emphasis of Forgiveness. We must investigate whether a closer study will reveal the falseness of this position, and give us a distinctively Johannine conception of Forgiveness.

11. THE APPROACH TO JOHN.

It is no part of our task to investigate the many aspects of what has come to be known as the 'Johannine Problem'. Critical questions lie mainly outside the scope of our study. Nevertheless no theme can be studied in a vacuum. If we are to study the writings of any man we need to know something of his background and outlook before we can fully understand his message. In our investigation we must decide how to approach the problem we have set ourselves.

Much modern scholarship has devoted itself to recovering something of the background of the Fourth Gospel. We can only indicate the main factors in this background and our conclusions regarding our approach.

The period of the first and second century A.D. was a period in which there was much movement and much thought. Roman, Greek and Jew and many other nationalities freely mingled and shared their thought and beliefs. Each was influenced by the other. When Clement of Alexandria wrote in 200 A.D. 'The way of truth is one, but different streams from different quarters flow into it as into an overflowing river' (Stromateis i.5) he was speaking literal truth. How far has this intermingling of ideas affected the writings we are now considering?

i. THE HELLENISTIC BACKGROUND.

Amongst the greatest influences abroad in the first century were the thoughts of Plato and the teaching of the Stoics. In popular thinking there had already been a fusion of the two elements. As we read the Fourth Gospel we cannot avoid seeing points of contact particularly with the Hellenistic background. The teaching about the 'real' Vine and the 'real' Bread suggests Plato's theories of the heavenly 'types'. The Logos theme in the Prologue has points of contact with Stoicism. Light and Darkness are conceptions which were familiar in the pagan religious mysticism of the age. It is obvious therefore that we must have some clear idea as to the relationship between the Johannine writings and the beliefs of Hellenism.

a. Philo of Alexandria.

Philo was the child of a rich and influential Jewish family and was trained in both Greek and Jewish learning. He was born about 20 B.C. and was thus partly contemporary with Jesus, the Baptist and Paul although he gives no indication that he had ever heard of them.

Philo loved the Old Testament and regarded all Scripture as divine revelation especially the Pentateuch. On the other hand his reason convinced him of the truth of Greek philosophy. He regarded

Philosophy and Revelation as one - Philosophy was abstract and intellectual, the Bible was concrete. The two had to be reconciled. The Old Testament must be interpreted in Hellenistic terms. The obvious and only method was allegory. Philo's writings are mainly allegorical expositions of the Pentateuch, for example 'On the World's Creation' is followed by 'Allegorical Interpretation of Genesis 11 and 111'. He combines a strong belief in the Inspiration of Holy Scriptures with a very free interpretation. If the words of the Old Testament appear incredible they must conceal an underlying thought (ὕπονοια) and it is Philo's business to discover that thought.

In his interpretation of the Old Testament according to Greek philosophy Philo draws from all the philosophical schools. Plato's theory of ideas is the foundation of his cosmology. The ideal primal man is the image of God from which all men spring. On the other hand he is indebted to Aristotle for the four-fold nature of causation (De Chr.125) and the doctrine of virtue as the means between extremes (Quod Deus 162). There are many examples which illustrate how much he was influenced by the Stoics e.g. the doctrine of four passions - grief, fear, desire, pleasure (Leg.All.ii.99) the sevenfold functions of the body - five senses, speech, reproduction (Leg.All.i.11) and the four-fold classification of material things - inorganic, plant, animals, reasoning beings' (Leg.All.ii.22f).

There are many affinities between Philo's writings and the Fourth Gospel. He uses Light as a symbol of God, God is described as the Fountain from which the water of life flows and the conception of God as shepherd is also prominent. These are Johannine symbols and it is not surprising that they should also be found in Philo. They are Old Testament figures and it would have been more than surprising if one who loved ~~his~~ Old Testament as Philo did had not used them.

The message of Philo is the Old Testament theme that the chief end of man is to know and serve God. God gives wisdom by which a man may come to know Him. This is reminiscent of the idea of eternal life in John. 'Philo approximates to the idea of eternal life in the Fourth Gospel. For both of them eternal life is to know God - *τὸν μόνον ἀληθινὸν θεόν* as they both say, and for both of them such knowledge is in part at least a matter of faith and love' (C.H.Dodd. p.65).

It is however especially in his conception of the Logos that Philo has been regarded as an influence on the writer of the Fourth Gospel. This is entirely due to the use of the term Logos in the Prologue of the Gospel. We shall have to examine Philo's conception of the Logos in more detail when we come to consider John 1.1-18. Apart from a possible link there we have no reason to think that Philo is the key in our approach to John. Points of contact there may be, common figures and language must be admitted, but the Johannine message is not grounded in Philo's system of ideas.

b. THE HERMETIC LITERATURE.

Much study has been given to the Hermetic Literature in recent years, particularly by C. H. Dodd, to whom the writer and others are indebted for his masterly examination in 'The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel'. The Hermetic writings have been translated and supplied with a careful Commentary by W. Scott, from whose editions the quotations below are taken.

The Hermetic writings date from the second or third centuries A.D. and therefore any direct borrowing by the New Testament writers is out of the question. They do however give an indication of the background of thought against which some of the New Testament documents were written. To quote Scott 'In the Hermetica we get a glimpse into one of the many workshops in which Christianity was fashioned' (Hermetica Vo.i.p.15).

The Hermetic teaching consists largely of a fusion of Greek philosophical ideas with the LXX and later Jewish mysticism. In the first book Poimandres reveals to Hermes the meaning of existence and in the later books Hermes passes on this knowledge to his son Tat and others. There is much in it which reminds us of the Gnostic systems. The Supreme God is described as Mind (*νοῦς*) and also as Life and Light. He has three sons - The Word (*λόγος*), Mind the Maker (*δημιουργός νοῦς*) and Man (*ἄνθρωπος*). The Word and Mind the Maker are God's agents in making the world. The Word separates the elements, Mind the Maker helps in the making of living beings, the heavenly bodies, etc. Man is a personification of the incorporeal part of man. He comes from God and is destined to go back to God.

The writers of the Hermetica are primarily interested in religion, not philosophy. The conception of religion, as C. H. Dodd has pointed out (op cit) is a spiritual one in which the way of salvation is by knowledge of God. This is not merely knowledge about God but the experience of God which leads to partaking of His nature.

The recurrence of the words 'Life' and 'Light' suggest a similar tradition to that of the Fourth Gospel. 'That Light am I, Reason, thy God' (C.H.i.6). 'O holy knowledge, enlightened by Thee, through the hymning the intellectual Light, I rejoice with the joy of mind. Save O Life; enlighten O Light' (C.H.i.18-19). 'But from the Light there came forth a holy Word, which took its stand upon the watery substance and one thought this Word was the voice of the Light' (C.H.i.5). 'Mind the Father of all, he who is Life and Light' (C.H.i.12).

There may be Zoroastrian and Oriental influences at work here but the Hebrew Scriptures might equally well have been the source of these ideas, a fact which Dodd admits. There is a Johannine ring about much of the language and undoubtedly a common background of religious thought.

On the other hand too much can be made of this. It is possible to parallel much of the Hermetic teaching and language with other parts of the New Testament e.g.

Mark x. 18. Why callest thou Me Good, none is good save one, even God.

Rom.iii.12. There is none that doeth good, no, not so much as one.

C.H. ii.14. None of the other beings called 'gods' nor any man or daemon, can be good in any degree. God alone is good; all other things are incapable of containing such a thing as the good.

or again cf.

2.Cor.iv.18. The things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

C.H. iv.9. Things seen delight us and things unseen give rise to disbelief. Now the things that are evil are more manifest to sight; but the Good cannot be seen by things manifest, for it has no form or shape. It is impossible that an incorporeal thing should be manifested to a thing that is corporeal, because the incorporeal is like to itself but unlike to all else.

We meet a kind of Logos doctrine in the Hermetica. The Logos is the thought of God which imposed differentiation upon undifferentiated chaos, the immanent reason of the Universe. It represents the sum of the emanations from the Eternal Mind which invade a man in order to expel evil powers from his material body. The Logos thus brings rebirth. We shall have to examine the Logos conception of John and the Hermetica more fully when we come to study the Gospel, but it must be said that although there are points of contact with the Hermetic writings John means something very different by the Logos from the conception in the Hermetic writings.

It can be admitted that investigation of the Hermetic writings has shown that there is a point of contact with the Fourth Gospel. The contact is a contact of vocabulary and ideas. 'While there is nothing to lead us to infer any direct literary relationship between the two writings, it will hardly be questioned that the similarities of expression suggest a common background of religious thought'. (Dodd p.36). There was a common background of thought against which the writers lived and a common idiom in which to express that thought. Whoever wrote the Fourth Gospel was faced with the problem of communication. He must express his message in terms which his readers would understand. A religious vocabulary was at his disposal. We should expect that he would use terms which his hearers would understand even if at times he altered the meaning of those terms.

Our conclusion therefore is that the Hermetic writings may throw some light on the form of the message of the Fourth Gospel. They show the kind of world in which 'John' was living and the ideas which were common amongst the men to whom he wished to give his message. He speaks their language but his message is his own.

ii. THE GNOSTIC SYSTEMS.

In the first and second century there were many systems which for convenience we group under the name of 'Gnostic'. It was thought that all these systems were later than the Christian revelation and Dodd quoted emphatically (I.F.G.98) that no Gnostic document could be dated before the period of the New Testament. Cullman maintained that there was a Jewish-Gnosticism in Palestine before Christianity, in fact that it was from here that Christianity sprang. The Discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls has now established beyond doubt that there was a pre-Christian Gnosticism.

The Gnostics varied a great deal in their motives and their elaboration. In some cases, for example, Valentinus, there seems to have been a sincere attempt to formulate a more adequate theology despite the ramifications of the systems used. In other cases the various systems suggest ways of varying complication, of understanding the relations between God and the world, between matter and spirit. They also offer the means of escape from matter into the knowledge of the higher world which brings immortality. These systems, which were essentially syncretist in outline, had a great appeal in the period following the age of the apostles.

'The object of the Gnostic teachers would seem to have been to put into the hands of the initiate the means of escape from the bondage of matter, and from fate and the ruler of malign powers, and to give him the opportunity of attaining immortality. But Gnosis is not in fact so much knowledge of God, in any profoundly religious sense, as knowledge about the structure of the higher world and the way to get there'. (C. H. Dodd I.F.G. p.101).

The writer of the Fourth Gospel was undoubtedly aware that such systems existed. They were common amongst the non-Christian public to which he wished to make his appeal. As we have seen in the case of Hellenism he used terms which were the common coin of his day. The First Epistle has the Gnostic systems very much in mind. When this was written there seems to have been a secession from the Church and John's attack on those who would deny the Incarnation has undoubtedly the Gnostics in mind. Docetists or Cerinthus or any other Gnostic groups would deny the possibility of God becoming flesh and suffering. But if John was aware of the Gnostic systems and at times used their terms we must bear in mind that when he speaks of Knowledge of God, it is a very different knowledge of God from that of the Gnostics.

The relationship between the Gnostic systems and John has been brought to the front of discussion in recent years by the theories of Bultmann. (Article in T.W.pp. 100-146). He has found a connection between the Fourth Gospel and the Mandaeans. The Mandaeans were a sect which flourished in the East and are still in existence today. The oldest MSS. in existence are from the sixteenth century but some believe the originals go back to about 700 A.D. and that the sect can be traced back to the Christian era. From the Mandaean documents we can see that the beliefs of this sect were dualistic and Gnostic. There was a repeated system of baptisms and the central theme was the story of a divine being who descended into the lower realms, fought with the powers of darkness and after victory ascended and rejoined the great Life. This seems to be a form of a myth of the Iranian religion and it is suggested that the Mandaeans had some connection with John the Baptist.

Bultmann's thesis is that the Fourth Gospel is a Christian revision of this. The 'Offenbarungsreden' used by John were Gnostic documents Christianised by combining with the 'Q' Source. He states in 'Das Evangelium des Johannes' that the Prologue to the Fourth Gospel is a Gnostic myth fastened on Jesus. The arguments used for this strange position are mainly threefold,

- a. a similarity between John and the Mandaeans.
- b. many parallels e.g. the unity of the Son with the Father, the power of the Son to give life, to pronounce judgment, to choose his own, etc.
- c. polemic against John the Baptist.

C. H. Dodd (IFG.p.123f) has pointed out that these arguments have no force unless it can be proved that the Mandaean corpus was earlier than John and known by him. Dodd feels (op cit 130) that the Mandaean literature is of no value for the study of the Fourth Gospel. Burkitt has come to the conclusion that far from John borrowing from the Mandaeans, they have obtained their ideas about Christianity from the Peshitta (J.T.S. xxix.225-235). Bultmann's thesis has not commended itself to many scholars and it is only mentioned here for the sake of completeness. It has been pointed out (Kraemer. Religion and the Christian Faith) that Bultmann's habit of almost entirely ignoring the Old Testament makes him a most unreliable interpreter of the Fourth Gospel. Despite the fact that Bultmann's commentary is one of the most important books of our generation we conclude that the attempt to connect John with the Mandaean literature is more ingenious than credible.

In our survey of the background of the Fourth Gospel we have found many points of contact. We can see links with the Hermetic literature and with Philo. There is an atmosphere which can be interpreted as akin to Gnosticism at its best. But what do

all these points of contact amount to? At the most we suggest that they show that the writer of the Fourth Gospel wrote against the background of his day, which we should expect. He also used, as any writer wishing to appeal to people of his time would use, certain conceptions and language which were common coin. There is nothing to suggest a powerful influence. When we have said all that we can say about the similarities the difference remains. There is in the Fourth Gospel that which owes nothing to Hellenistic philosophical speculation or Gnostic myth. There is an original strain which has still to be accounted for. 'The most that can be said is that, in commending Christianity to the surrounding pagan world, terms belonging to the religious vocabulary current in these regions were sometimes borrowed'. (Howard. Christianity according to St. John pp.30).

The time has come therefore to leave the background of the Hellenistic world and turn to the Gospel itself. Lightfoot (St. John's Gospel. p.vi) has said 'It is a good rule for the student always to try to explain St. John by St. John'. It is at any rate possible that the clue to the approach must be found within the Gospel itself.

iv. THE BACKGROUND OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

When we turn to the Gospel itself we are immediately conscious of its Hebrew background and are confronted with the fact that the Old Testament is well-known by the writer. William Temple stated 'The Gospel is through and through Palestinian. The notion that it is in any sense Hellenistic is contrary to its whole tenor'. (Readings in the Fourth Gospel p.xix). If we cannot completely agree with the judgment that it owes nothing to Hellenism we must admit that the Hebrew element is more dominant than anything else. The Gospel reminds its readers that 'salvation is of the Jews' and there is no question of the dominance of the Old Testament.

A brief glance at the following points will illustrate the truth of our contention:-

a. There are a large number of quotations from the Old Testament, at least one of which is taken direct from the Hebrew. Eight times we get the phrase 'It is written' when introducing a quotation. Seven times we get a phrase such as 'The scripture saith' or 'that the scripture may be fulfilled'. In three cases the actual source is given and on other occasions such phrases as 'it is written in the prophets' or 'in your law it is written'. There are a number of quotations without any comment such as these.

b. Some of the symbols are undoubtedly taken from the Old Testament. The figure of the Shepherd has many points of contact in the Old Testament and the contrast between the Good Shepherd and unfaithful shepherds is also there. The figure of the Vine is another illustration of this point. We shall need to deal with these symbols in more detail when we come to our main thesis but their derivation is clear.

c. C. K. Barrett (St. John p. 23) gives a list of other passages which he believes are influenced by the Old Testament although there is no actual quotation. Examples are v.31-47 vii.19-24, viii.39-44.

d. Some conceptions which seem at first sight to have links with Hellenistic and other thought appear on further investigation to be more firmly rooted in the Old Testament. One example is the Prologue to the Gospel. The point of contact with Genesis i. is a real possibility and the idea of the 'Logos' owes more to the 'Word' of God of the Old Testament than to the Greeks. The detailed discussion of this will come later. It need only be said that the idea of the Word of God becoming a historical figure and entering into physical and mental relationships with men is a conception that reminds us much more of the Old Testament than of Greek philosophy.

e. Although again we shall have to face the subject in more details later, the whole of the Fourth Gospel is dominated by the theme of 'He that should come'. It is the Gospel of the Messiah. He is the Messiah of the Jews. He is the Messiah to whose coming all the Old Testament was a prelude.

We assume therefore that one of the keys to the understanding of the Fourth Gospel is to be found here. In our approach to John on the particular subject we have set for investigation we approach one who is dominated by the Old Testament. The conceptions under which he will speak of sin and forgiveness, and indeed of anything else, will be the conceptions of the Old Testament. These conceptions of course may be modified by Jewish thinking after the close of the Old Testament Canon. It will be necessary therefore to examine the Old Testament teaching on the subject of Sin and its Forgiveness and to look at the teachings of Rabbinic Judaism, before we can understand John.

Before turning to the Old Testament, however, there is another question which has to be faced.

We are investigating an account of the life and teaching of Jesus. How near are we in the Johannine writings to the actual words of Jesus and to the actual facts of His life? Is this writer who is grounded in the Old Testament, a reliable authority for the matters about which he writes? This raises the whole question of the authorship of the Fourth Gospel and the Epistles and the relationship between the Fourth Gospel and the Synoptics. Here again we are dealing with a problem which is outside the scope of our investigation and the most that can be done is to indicate the personal point of view of the present writer.

III. THE RELIABILITY OF ST. JOHN.

I. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE FOURTH GOSPEL AND THE SYNOPTICS.

a. The obvious differences.

The list of the differences between the Synoptic and Johannine accounts of the ministry of Jesus has often been quoted. Amongst the more obvious ones it is only necessary to draw attention to the following:-

i. The ministry of Jesus and of the Baptist overlap in John whereas in the Synoptics Jesus does not commence His ministry until after John's arrest.

ii. The scene of the ministry in John is almost entirely in Jerusalem whereas in the Synoptics Jesus does not come to Jerusalem until the last week of His ministry, apart from the visit as a youth, unless we accept T. W. Manson's suggestion that the Triumphal entry took place six months before the crucifixion. It must be pointed out however that other visits are implied in the Synoptics, notably in the story of the Temptation and in the words of Jesus as he wept over Jerusalem (How often would I, etc.).

iii. The cleansing of the Temple is placed at the beginning of the ministry in John. In the Synoptics it is placed at the beginning of the last week. There are as good arguments for believing John to be right as there are in favour of the Synoptic tradition. Too much emphasis must not be placed on this nor on other differences in chronology. As C. K. Barrett says (op cit p.37) 'neither Mark nor John was greatly interested in chronology'.

iv. The cause of the arrest is given in the Synoptics as the Cleansing of the Temple but in John the raising of Lazarus provides the final issue.

v. The dating of the Last Supper is different - again John may be more accurate than the Synoptics.

vi. There is a difference in style. The synoptic style is completely at variance with that of John. It must be pointed out that there are parts of John which are written in a style similar to that of the Synoptics e.g. the marriage at Cana, and there are also parts of the Synoptics which if they had been found in the Fourth Gospel would have been accepted as **distinctively** Johannine e.g. the passage in St. Matthew beginning 'All things have been delivered unto Me - come unto Me'.

vii. The Person of Christ is interpreted as in process of historical development in the Synoptics. In John He is recognised as the Messiah from the beginning.

viii. John has many important omissions. He says nothing about the Baptism of Jesus (although it may be implied in i.33), the Temptation, Transfiguration, the Agony in the Garden, the Ascension. There are no parables unless one includes the Vine, the Door, etc., in this category, and no account of the Institution of the Eucharist.

Many of these differences have been felt to be very serious as regards their implications as to John's reliability. Loisy remarked of the author of the Fourth Gospel, 'a believer without apparently any personal reminiscence of what has been the life, preaching and death of Jesus; a history far removed from every historical preoccupation' (*Le Quatrieme Evangile* quoted. A.C. Headlam 'The Fourth Gospel as history' p.12) and F. C. Burkitt expressed it thus 'If we are to regard the Fourth Gospel as a narrative of events, we can only say that the writer has given a false impression of what occurred'. (*Gospel History and its Transmission*. p. 224-5).

b. John's use of the Synoptics.

It was the general opinion until a few years ago that John knew and used Mark, and that he was possibly acquainted with Luke but had no knowledge of Matthew. Gardner Smith (*St. John and the Synoptic Gospels*) and others (see footnote p.17 Howard 'Christianity according to St. John'), have however very much weakened the case for John's dependence upon Mark. C. K. Barrett (*op cit* p.34) sums up the present position when he says 'John did not use any of the Synoptics as Matthew used Mark. The most that can be said is that John had read Mark and was influenced by its contents'. A close affinity has been suggested between John and 'Proto-Luke' but this is mainly in the story of the Passion.

We are therefore faced with the position that there are many serious differences between John and the Synoptics and there is no evidence to suggest that John was following a Synoptic account as he wrote. Once again we can only indicate the personal point of view of the present writer in approaching these questions.

c. An original tradition.

i. The point of view.

We contend that the Fourth Gospel is different from the Synoptics first of all because it is written from a different point of view. Hoskyns has suggested that theological documents must be conceived from a Theological point of view. 'The Fourth Gospel is the solution of the riddle of the first three. The Synoptics raise problems. The Fourth Gospel gives the key! Here we have, again in the words of Hoskyns 'the non-historical which makes sense of history'.

If John is trying chiefly to interpret the ministry of Jesus, not merely to describe it, we should expect differences. Chronology

has no particular importance. We suggest that John was acquainted with Mark and probably with Luke but that neither used them nor was influenced greatly by them. His purpose was to present the Incarnation of God against the background of eternity.

ii. Another Source.

Howard pointed out (Fourth Gospel in Recent Crit. and Int. p. 133) that there are certain things in the Fourth Gospel which suggest that it is dependent upon another source than the Synoptics. The Passion narrative in particular gives indications of another authority. John seems to have a source so reliable that he feels able to make corrections in the accounts given by the Synoptics e.g. the story of the anointing in xii. I. when he gives the precise point of time 'six days before the Passover', correcting Matthew and Mark. The dating of the Last Supper is another case in point. Howard suggests that this other source may be either a written source or that of an eye-witness. T. W. Manson made the suggestion of a source connected with Antioch to which we refer later. A Jerusalem source has also been suggested. Even C. H. Dodd (IFG p.449) who believes that for historicity we should go to the Synoptics rather than to John says 'I should not care to say that the hypothesis is impossible that the Johannine narrative rests upon personal reminiscences'.

We assume therefore that the differences between John and the Synoptics do not take away in the slightest from the reliability of the Fourth Gospel for our purpose. If John is writing from another point of view and with either a written source or the testimony of an eye-witness it explains any differences there are. We assume that we are dealing with an independent tradition of equal value with the Synoptic tradition.

II. THE AUTHORSHIP OF THE FOURTH GOSPEL AND THE EPISTLES.

On the question of authorship the literature is vast and all that can be done is to summarise the evidence as the present writer sees it and indicate a personal point of view. A full examination would lie outside the scope of this thesis.

Lightfoot (St. John's Gospel. 1956 p.2) makes the following statement, 'From the latter part of the second century, if not earlier, the authorship has been assigned in the tradition of the Church to an eye-witness of the Lord's ministry, one of the original twelve, the younger son of Zebedee. This still received support and has never been shown to be impossible'.

Archbishop Temple (Readings in St. John p.x.) thought that the direct apostolic authorship was still worthy of consideration and A. M. Hunter (Interpreting the N.T. p.85ff) says that the theory of apostolic authorship is by no means indefensible.

We commence this section therefore with John the Son of Zebedee as the possible writer of the Gospel.

a. John the Son of Zebedee.

We can only indicate the evidence here which seems to fall into two divisions,

(i) External. There is a persistent tradition that John lived to an extreme old age and died in Ephesus. Irenaeus (adv. Haer.III.i.I quoted by Eusebius. HE.v.viii.4) speaks of John, the Son of Zebedee as the beloved disciple and says that he 'gave out' the Gospel in Ephesus. (Ἰωάννης ἐξέδωκε τὸ εὐαγγέλιον ἐν Ἐφέσῳ)

Clement of Alexandria (quoted Eusebius HE.vi.xiv.7) cites John as the author of the Gospel and says that he was 'urged by his friends' to write it. So also Tertullian and Origen. The Muratorian Fragment is also quite clear. 'The disciples fasted and prayed and it was revealed to Andrew that John should describe all things in his own name; for he professes he was a spectator and hearer and writer of all the wonders of the Lord in order'.

(ii) Internal. John the Son of Zebedee is not mentioned by name in the Fourth Gospel. If he is the author that is understandable but as Strachan says (The Fourth Gospel p.82) 'if the writer is not the son of Zebedee it is an inconceivable omission that the Gospel has no reference to the Son of Zebedee'. An unnamed disciple is associated with Peter at the trial and three other passages associate Peter with the beloved disciple (xiii.23 xx 2 xxi). The beloved disciple must be one of the seven in Chapter xxi, two of the seven being the sons of Zebedee. It is a reasonable assumption that the son of Zebedee was the 'beloved disciple', although other theories deserve serious consideration.

In addition the writer of the Gospel shows the characteristics of an eye-witness of the events he is recording. He is familiar with the Palestine tradition in place names, his topographical notes are accurate as we should expect of an eye-witness and he has a familiarity with Jewish doctrine and the methods of Rabbinic argument.

So far the evidence points to the probability that the Fourth Gospel was written by John, the son of Zebedee, the beloved disciple. But there are objections.

b. Objections to apostolic authorship.

i. No Christian writer before Irenaeus refers to John residing in Asia. Ignatius describing Paul's connection with Ephesus never mentions John. This of course is an argument e silentio although

it must be admitted that it carries more weight than a usual *e silentio* argument. C. K. Barrett, however, thinks it improbable that John's connection with Ephesus is pure invention. There is likely to be some truth behind it.

ii. There is a tradition that John the Apostle was martyred early. The evidence for this is as follows:-

a. According to a 7th or 8th Century epitome of the history of Philip of Side 'Papias in his second book says that John the divine and James his brother were slain by the Jews'. This is supported by Harmartolos writing in the 9th Century.

b. The old martyrologies commemorate John and James on the same date - December 27th in the Syriac Church. It should be noted that this evidence is from a late date when all the apostles were credited with martyrdom.

c. Mark x. vv39-40 is said to be a prediction of John's Death.

The testimony of Philip of Side does not commend itself as reliable. Two comments are worth quoting.

J. H. Bernard (St. John. Vol. i. p. xlii) 'No historical inference can be drawn from a corrupt sentence in a late epitome of the work of a careless and blundering historian'.

A. S. Peake (Holborn Review. xix. 1928. p. 394, quoted Dodd IFG. 232). 'The alleged martyrdom of the apostle John I still firmly disbelieve. It has gained a credence which seems to me amazing in view of the slenderness of the evidence on which it is built, which would have provoked derision if it had been adduced in favour of a conservative conclusion'.

iii. It is hardly likely that the apostle John as we know him from the Synoptics could have written so profoundly mystical a book as the Fourth Gospel and he would not be likely to use Mark. We have already seen that it is by no means certain that he did use Mark and if he used it at all he used it very sparingly. So far as the type of book the apostle could have written, that is a psychological judgment which it is impossible to confirm or deny.

c. The tradition of Apostolic Authorship linked with another hand.

We do not feel that anything in the objections so far referred to can be said to controvert the tradition of apostolic authorship. There does seem to be however a tradition that another hand was involved in the writing of the Gospel.

Papias (Expositions. quot. Eusebius HE. III. xxxix 3f quot. CKB. p. 89) speaks of John the Apostle and also John the Elder. According to some late 10th Century Prefaces to the Latin Gospels Papias of Prochorus wrote the Gospel at John's dictation. In the

Gospel itself there are two passages which seem to suggest two hands - John xix.35 'he who has seen.... and that one knows', and xxi.24. 'This is the disciple....and we know', where the disciple is distinguished from the witness. Lightfoot. (St. John.p.4) acknowledges the weight of this but still feels that the internal evidence suggests a single writer with a single mind.

It cannot be said that this evidence by itself amounts to very much but it does act as a pointer to another problem in connection with apostolic authorship.

d. The relationship between the Fourth Gospel and the Johannine Epistles.

If the common authorship of the Gospel and the Epistles can be established it is very difficult to believe in apostolic authorship. The writer of 2 and 3 John describes himself as *πρεβύτερος* a term never used of the twelve. It would certainly not be used by John, the son of Zebedee, of himself. According to Irenaeus (Letter to Rome quot.Eus.E.H.v.20) *πρεβύτεροι* are disciples of disciples. We have seen that Papias distinguishes John the Elder from John the Apostle. If a common authorship of Gospel and Epistles can be established it seems that the writer must be 'John the Elder', whoever he may have been.

A universal early tradition maintains this common authorship (see Eus.CH. VII.25f). We have the testimony of Irenaeus and Clement of Alexandria amongst others. The style, leading ideas and vocabulary are very similar. There are parallel passages, common phrases and themes, and common constructions in the documents. It has been assumed that this evidence taken together makes common authorship almost an axiom. Moffatt (Intro. to Lit of N.T.p.589ff) did show however that there were many differences, sufficient to raise a query, and C. H. Dodd (Moffatt N.T.Comm.Johannine Ep. and John Rylands Bulletin XXI (1937) pp.129-56) has come out against common authorship for the following reasons:-

- i. The Gospel is in an entirely richer style than the monotony of the Epistles.
- ii. There are Aramaic touches in the Gospel which are entirely missing from the Epistles.
- iii. In the matter of vocabulary there are several phrases which are characteristic of the Fourth Gospel which are missing when we come to the Epistles. Such terms as saved, lost, Son of Man, are not found.
- iv. The Epistles have no direct O.T. quotations and only one indirect reference whereas the Gospel is permeated by the O.T.
- v. The Epistles are theologically nearer to the primitive Church than the Gospel.

Dr. Dodd is very dogmatic on these points but we have to remember that differences are inevitable especially in documents written with such different purposes. Over against this the resemblances are overwhelming. W. F. Howard (JTS. XLVIII Jan-Apr. ~~xx~~ 1947. & XLIX) answered C. H. Dodd in detail and showed that none of the objections to common authorship were convincing. On this matter let us again sum up with two quotations,

Holtzmann, who incidentally denies the common authorship, says 'There is more resemblance between the Gospel and the Epistles than between St. Luke's Gospel and the Acts of the Apostles'. W. F. Howard quotes Streeter (The Four Gospels p.460) 'The three Epistles and the Gospel of John are so closely allied in diction, style and general outlook that the burden of proof lies with the person who would deny the common authorship,...we are forced to conclude that all four documents are by the same hand. And few people, I would add, with any feeling for literary style or for the finer nuance of character and feeling, would hesitate to affirm this but for the implications which seem to be involved'.

e. The Problem and the Answers.

We are faced then with this problem. If the apostolic authorship can be established we can claim that we are in touch with an original source reliable for our purpose. If this must be abandoned can we claim that 'John' is reliable for interpreting the words and ministry of Jesus?

There is a long tradition of apostolic authorship. Against that position various objections are raised. We have seen that they cannot be established. But the relationship between the Gospel and Epistles raises a far more serious objection to the apostolic authorship.

Faced with this problem only three answers can be given and they all find supporters today.

i. Apostolic authorship can be maintained.

The early date now recognised for the Gospel makes it possible for it to have been written by a younger contemporary of our Lord. The evidence for the early martyrdom of John has been discredited. This position respects the tradition and explains the marks of authenticity we discussed under internal evidence. If Dodd's theory that Gospel and Epistles are by different authors is accepted there is no final reason why this position should be suspect. Temple leaned to this position, in fact he went so far as to say that he would regard any theory with extreme suspicion which did not find the closest possible connection between the Fourth Gospel and the son of Zebedee. If this position is maintained it does not account for the omission of parables and the more intimate details we should expect from a writer so close to Jesus as the Son of Zebedee was.

ii. Apostolic authorship can be denied and the Gospel attributed to some anonymous Christian.

The denial of apostolic authorship does raise its own problems. It ignores the tradition or regards it as suspect. The apostolic authority with which it was received, the marks of an eye-witness, the knowledge of geography, the Aramaisms must all be set aside. What is more, some other hypothesis must be found. There are many supporters of this point of view each with a theory of his own. For illustration we mention but two.

T. W. Manson, writing in the 'Bulletin of John Rylands Library' (May 1947.Vol.30. No. 2) suggests the following. There was a body of tradition which should be traced to an anonymous disciple of the Lord having its home in Jerusalem. This tradition found its way to the headquarters of the Church in Antioch. Here it left its mark on documents and missionaries. From Antioch the tradition moved to Ephesus and the final literary formation was achieved. We have no idea of how much was original or how much was added on this long journey. This of course is a theory. It is difficult to see just how it improves on any other theory and there is no positive evidence to support it although as Manson suggests it would explain Paul's agreement with John on the dating of the Eucharist and also for Ignatius' silence.

C. K. Barrett (Commentary on St. John p.113) says that the evidence on the question of Johannine authorship amounts to very little. He is quite sure that the Gospel was not written by an apostle. His suggestion is that John the Apostle moved to Ephesus where he spent his time composing apocalyptic works. He gathered round himself a number of pupils. After his death one of his pupils gathered his works together and published them as the Apocalypse. Another pupil wrote the Epistles. Another pupil wrote John I-20 but did not publish it. This document was seized and used by the Gnostics. Later it was edited for Christians and Chapter 21 was added. The original writer had been forgotten, the references to John the Apostle were misunderstood and he was therefore named as the author. To the present writer this theory seems an illustration of the extent of fantasy which can be included in a theory to make it plausible. Mr. Barrett produces no scrap of evidence to support the hypothesis he puts forward. To be just one must admit that he puts it forward very tentatively. To suggest however that the man who spent his time in Ephesus writing fiery Apocalyptic works could at the same time inspire a pupil to write the Fourth Gospel seems far-fetched in the extreme. We must note however that even this theory allows for some genuine connection between the Apostle John and the Gospel.

To attribute the Gospel to some anonymous Christian means a theory of some kind and a theory built upon supposition. It cannot in the nature of things be easier than accepting Apostolic authorship.

iii. Apostolic authority and non-apostolic authorship.

This is perhaps the middle way. Some have felt that the evidence for the connection between the son of Zebedee and the Fourth Gospel is too strong to be lightly set aside. At the same time there have been difficulties in accepting the full implications of apostolic authorship. The suggestion has therefore been made that the Gospel was written by John the Elder, the author of the Epistles, with the authority of the Son of Zebedee behind it. To quote Harnack 'that in some way John the Son of Zebedee is behind the Fourth Gospel must be admitted and hence our Gospel is to be considered as the Gospel of John the Presbyter according to John the son of Zebedee'. This position is accepted in the main by J. H. Bernard. Dr. Howard, whilst rejecting Johannine authorship says a connection with the son of Zebedee is extremely probable.

f. Conclusions.

It remains therefore to state a personal position. The present writer concludes that the strength of the tradition connecting the Son of Zebedee with the Fourth Gospel does not entirely rest upon delusion. The tradition of the early martyrdom of John cannot stand against the objections to it. On the other hand the writer cannot accept Dr. Dodd's conclusion that the Gospel and Epistles are not by the same author. This common authorship does raise the difficulty surrounding the description of the writer of the Epistles as *πρεσβύτερος*. As we have seen it is very difficult to believe that an apostle would use this term of himself. The hypothesis that we can accept must therefore

a. keep a connection between the Son of Zebedee and the Fourth Gospel.

b. allow for the common authorship of Gospel and Epistles. The internal evidence for the connection with an eye-witness who may have been the son of Zebedee seems particularly strong despite Barrett's attempt to minimise it.

The present writer then takes the position that the Gospel and the Epistles were by the same hand, probably John the Presbyter, who was probably a disciple of John the Apostle and sat at his feet as he told and interpreted 'what he had seen with his eyes and his hands handled concerning the Word of Life'.

4. SUMMARY.

We have undertaken this brief survey with one purpose only. We are to investigate the teaching of the Fourth Gospel and the Johannine Epistles on the themes of Sin and Forgiveness. What is our approach to be? It seems beyond question to the present writer that we are dealing with the writings of someone who could at the very least be said to be in touch with an eye-witness of the events

recorded, who could draw upon his own memories of the life and ministry of Jesus. The writer and possibly the eye-witness too were men who were steeped in the Old Testament and who had learned to think in its categories. The experience of the Son of God which these men had known was interpreted against the background of the Old Testament revelation. To this we must now turn. What the writer of the Johannine literature understood by sin and forgiveness would be what he had learned from the Old Testament and the new Revelation would not ignore the Old but shine through it.

Chapter II. SIN AND FORGIVENESS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.

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II. The RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MAN AND GOD.

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III. THE PATTERN OF MAN'S SALVATION.

IV. THE RELEVANCE FOR JOHANNINE STUDY.

CHAPTER II. SIN AND FORGIVENESS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.

The terms 'sin' and 'forgiveness' are often used in an abstract sense and it is easy to forget their theological significance. To use them accurately is to use terms which concern the relationships between persons. Without a relationship between persons 'sin' and 'forgiveness' are terms without meaning. If a man sins he sins against someone. If he is forgiven someone must do the forgiving. We must therefore study sin and forgiveness in a context of relationship, the relationship between man and his God. This relationship is above all else the theme of the Old Testament.

I. THE LIVING GOD.

A. THE HOLINESS OF GOD.

Rudolf Otto in his book 'The Idea of the Holy' has familiarised us with the idea of the 'numinous' in religion. The beginnings of all religion seem to be associated with this mystery. Religion begins, not in thought, but in the sense, feeling or awareness of some presence that inspires awe. In his experience of life man is conscious of some presence or power in the universe apart from himself. In the phenomena of nature and especially in anything unusual man feels a presence not his own. In various places and at various times he is conscious of being face to face with something mysterious. This creates in him a sense of dread and yet at the same time attracts him. In this sense of awe are the roots of all worship.

The idea of the 'numinous' is very pronounced in the Old Testament. Jacob at Bethel and Peniel, Moses before the Burning Bush, Samuel at Shiloh are early examples of men in what Martin Buber describes as 'the singular region where great personal experiences are propagated in ways that can no longer be identified' (Buber xi). Throughout the period of the prophets the same applies. Elijah's experience at Horeb and Isaiah's call in the Temple at Jerusalem are dominated by the 'numinous'. From Abraham's 'Who am I that I should speak unto God who am but dust and ashes' to Isaiah's 'Woe is me for I am undone' there is the experience of something which overawes, something which attracts and yet repels.

The religion of the Old Testament begins with the Holiness of God in this sense of the 'numinous'. In this it has much in common with all primitive religion. The Old Testament shows a development from this primitive idea until it has both ritualistic and ethical content. Holiness is a concept which comes to include

righteousness and this is a conception of holiness which owes almost everything to the eighth century prophets. Primarily however the God of the Old Testament is a God who makes men aware of His Presence. 'The God of the Old Testament is the God of experience and not of speculation' says H. H. Rowley (Rowley). It is an experience distinct from that found elsewhere in any other religion.

B. THE MANIFESTATION OF GOD.

We have seen that Old Testament religion has, in common with other religions, the idea of the 'numinous'. Man is aware of a presence other than himself in the universe. The Old Testament, however, from the very beginning, goes further than this. God is not just a universal presence. He is a Being who manifests Himself to man deliberately and purposively. He reveals Himself in the history of the community of Israel and again and again draws near to encounter certain people. This encounter is a crisis which always brings with it a demand.

The story of Moses in the desert clearly indicates this (Exod.iii 1-14.) Moses becomes conscious not merely of a Presence as he contemplates the burning bush. He is conscious of someone deliberately drawing near to him personally. The encounter is a crisis in the life of Moses and in the life of the Hebrew people. Moses realises that Someone draws near with the intention of naming a demand. God comes because He wishes to come to this particular individual and because He has a purpose for this particular individual to fulfil. The encounter immediately produces a crisis. Moses has to face up to a demand - the demand to do God's will. He shrinks from it but responds with obedience.

Abraham (Gen.xv.6), Samuel at Shiloh, Elijah at Horeb, Isaiah in the Temple are other examples which could be quoted. Amos, Jeremiah, Ezekiel are conscious of an encounter with the Divine before they take up their work. The encounter brings to each of them a crisis and a demand. They shrink from the task but respond with obedience. They fulfil their task under the strong constraint of a call - God has deliberately approached them with a demand that they should fulfil His purpose.

Through these particular men God deliberately approaches Israel because He wishes to approach Israel. The people are faced with a demand. The coming of the prophet whether it be concerning an individual as Nathan to David concerning Bathsheba and Elijah to Ahab after the murder of Naboth, or concerning a nation as Isaiah to Hezekiah, always creates a crisis. The individual or nation is confronted by a demand from God.

The Old Testament therefore shows us a God who is no mere universal Presence. He is a God who draws near to men in a certain way whenever He wills. The whole theme of the Old Testament is the message of a God who is drawing near to men in history and experience. He draws near in concrete situations encountering men and making a

demand.^{his} It is a demand for a certain kind of relationship between man and God.

II. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MAN AND GOD.

A. THE IDEAL RELATIONSHIP - THE COVENANT WITH ISRAEL.

The 'Ideal' relationship between man and God is summed up in the term 'Covenant'. This is the relationship which God initiates and the relationship which God demands. The word 'Berith' occurs 289 times in the Old Testament, 260 of them with the direct meaning of Covenant. It is the theme which all the time dominates the relationship of Israel with God.

We get the earliest idea of the Covenant in the stories of Noah (Gen.ix.9-17) and Abraham (Gen.xv.18.xvii. 2-21). We hear of a Covenant with Jacob and Isaac (Lv.xxvi.42). In each case the Covenant is made with an individual but with wider reference. Noah's Covenant is extended to men whom God will not destroy again. The Covenant with Abraham is extended to his seed. The Covenant is renewed under Moses and even survives disobedience in the wilderness. It is made later with David.

In one sense the term seems to admit of an interpretation as an agreement or even a bargain between two parties. God will look after Noah, Abraham, Israel if they, on their part, will do His will. This however is to over-simplify altogether. The Covenant is in no sense a bargain. The initiative comes from the sheer undeserved grace of God. He draws near in order that He may bestow. God has chosen Israel for a special purpose. He has chosen them simply because He willed to choose them. The Covenant is part of the purpose. God has elected to choose Israel out of all the nations of the earth in order that they may fulfil His purposes. As with the Manifestation, the Covenant is deliberate and it is purposive.

Throughout the history Israel is never allowed to forget the sheer wonder of this Covenant relationship with God. The more it is reflected upon the more amazing it seems and yet it is true. Deuteronomy represents a late and deeply reflective interpretation of Israel's experience and here the wonder of the Covenant is paramount.

"The Lord did not set His love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all peoples, but because the Lord loveth you and because He would keep the oath which He sware unto your fathers, hath the Lord brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you out of the house of bondage from the hand of Pharaoh, king of Egypt.

"Know ye therefore that the Lord thy God, He is God; the faithful God which keepeth Covenant and mercy with them that love Him and keep His commandments (vii.7-9)".

"Did ever people hear the voice of God speaking out of the midst of the fire as thou hast heard, and live?

"Because he loved thy fathers, therefore He chose their seed after them and brought thee out with His presence, with His great power out of Egypt" (iv.33,37 -- the whole passage should be studied).

The greatest thing in their history is that God has, of His free grace and not of their merit, chosen them out of all the peoples of the earth, to be His Covenant people.

We begin to see the true meaning of the Covenant when we examine the method of its institution. The story as told in Exodus xxiv. vv 4-8, attributed to the 'E' source, is the story of a certain ritual. The people are present before the altar, the altar which represents God. The oxen are slain and the blood drained into basins. Half of the blood is thrown upon the altar. Moses reads the terms of the Covenant and the people respond 'All that the Lord hath spoken we will do and be obedient'. The remainder of the blood is then sprinkled on the people with the words, 'Behold the blood of the Covenant'. A. S. Peake (p.188) says that 'the significance of this is to be explained in the light of the custom of blood-brotherhood. When two men wished to make a blood-covenant each would drink a little of the other's blood. In that way each incorporated something of the other's life. Later this was refined into the rite of dipping the hand into a bowl containing the blood of an animal. The sprinkling of blood from the same vessel on both parties similarly creates a covenant-bond'. In the story we are considering therefore the common blood is cast upon the altar and upon the people as a symbol that they are one and share one another's life. It is the literal joining of life to life. God and Israel now belong to each other. God is, in one sense, part of Israel and Israel belongs to God. The Covenant ritual establishes 'at-one-ness'.

God has thus called Israel into a relationship with Himself which did not exist before. The relationship is one of 'at-one-ness' with God. This at-one-ness implies obedience. Throughout the Old Testament this theme is basic. Even when the word 'Covenant' is not frequently used, as in the early prophets, the idea of 'Covenant' is there. The prophets are in no doubt that through God's initiative Israel is in a special relationship with Him. God has made a promise which he will keep. Israel has been chosen to fulfil God's purposes and to do His Will. It is her duty to obey. In the Deuteronomic literature the relationship of Israel as a 'peculiar people' becomes dominant, the Ark comes to be called the 'Ark of the Covenant' (Deut.x.8).

Israel's duty being to obey, God must make known to her His Will. This He does through certain kinds of men—priests, kings, judges, prophets. He approaches Moses at the Burning Bush with a message He is to take to the people of Israel (Exod.iii.13-15). Moses says to Jethro 'I make them know the statutes of God and His laws' (Ex.xviii.16). Moses goes to Sinai after Rephidim and 'the Lord called to him out of the mountain saying 'Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel' (Exod.xix.3). Deborah calls Barak in the Name of the Lord (Judg.iv.) and the prophets preface their words continually with 'Thus said the Lord'.

God also makes known His Will through the facts of Israel's history and experience. Defeat, rebuff or victory in war carry their message from Him.

As the conception of God grows through the centuries and the prophetic picture of God as a God of Righteousness becomes clear so also the idea of God's demand develops. A righteous God demands righteousness of Israel. If He is righteous, to be 'at-one' with Him implies righteousness in His people.

The Covenant theme of the Old Testament reveals the reason for the Manifestation of God. God draws near to men with the deliberate purpose of bringing men into 'at-one-ness' with Himself. That can only happen when men do God's Will and make their purposes one with His. The Covenant therefore brings a demand - the demand that men shall do God's Will. Confronted with this demand man faces the supreme crisis of his existence.

B. THE BROKEN RELATIONSHIP.

a. SIN AND ITS NATURE.

It is against the background of the Covenant relationship with God that the Old Testament sees the fact of sin. Sin represents a refusal to do God's Will, a refusal of God's demand, a rejection of God's manifestation of Himself.

The whole Old Testament doctrine of sin is summed up in the 'J' account of the Fall in Genesis iii. God declares His Will for man by putting him in the garden and stating what he may and may not do. In the midst of everything he is allowed to do there is one absolute prohibition. The coveted object is not evil. It is in itself good but it is prohibited. Man is given dominion over all creation but he has not dominion over himself. He is subject to the Will of God. The story of the Fall is the story of man 'making himself as God', in other words, claiming the right to sovereignty independent of God's expressed Will. He exercises his right to defy God and all the consequences follow. Sin here is rebellion against the known will of God, a refusal of God's demand for obedience.

Throughout the Old Testament sin has this meaning - it is to do something of which God disapproves. This can mean anything from the setting up of false gods (Exod.xxxii) to unrighteousness of life. It can also mean to infringe the rights of another Israelite. Because of the Covenant Israel and its God are regarded as one. To offend a fellow-Israelite is therefore to offend God. Sin and crime are one and the same thing. This can even apply when the person concerned is not an Israelite. Joseph, tempted by Potiphar's wife regards it not only as a crime against his master but says 'how then can I do this great wickedness and sin against God' (Gen.xxxix 7-10).

Oesterley and Robinson (p.202) say that 'to the ordinary Israelite sin was a neglect of ritual regulations, to the prophets it was a violation of the moral law'. This is only partly true. There is a little distinction between ritual and moral to begin with but the moral is undoubtedly there. The rebuke of David by Nathan concerning Bathsheba and Elijah's denunciation of Ahab in the matter of Naboth's vineyard are cases in point. If it be objected that, although early, these instances are taken from the stories of two prophets, one might refer again to the story of Joseph in the house of Potiphar quoted above. The Book of the Covenant contains more than ritual. There are regulations concerning the treatment of slaves, of debtors, and the poor and also concerning the regard to be observed for parents.

It is however true to say that with the eighth century prophets righteousness comes to be understood more ethically and sin is regarded as unrighteous behaviour. But in every sphere the refusal of God's demand is always regarded as rebellion. Amos demands absolute justice in the Name of God 'Seek good and not evil that ye may live; and so the Lord the God of hosts shall be with you, as ye say' (v.14).

Hosea declares 'the Lord hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, because there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land' and then goes on to list ethical failings 'there is nought but swearing and breaking faith, and killing, and stealing and committing adultery; they break out, and blood toucheth blood' (iv.1, 2). He brings forward righteousness as the demand of God 'I desire mercy and not sacrifice' (vi.6).

Isaiah is equally explicit. In the Great Assize described in chapter i nothing could be more clear than 'I have nourished and brought up children and they have rebelled against me (i.2)'. 'Why will ye be still stricken that ye revolt more and more' (i.5). Micah sums up the message of all the eighth century prophets 'What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with thy God' (vi.8).

God demands righteousness. To be unrighteous is to defy God. As N. H. Snaith has pointed out (Snaith p.60) sin is 'theofugal'. It is a flight from the manifestation of God and a rebellion against the demands of God. 'It is not just transgression of a code but primarily rebellion against God'.

After the Exile the ethical and the ritual are regarded equally as the demands of God. The word 'holy' is used both of ceremonial and moral obligations. Ezekiel places in the same passage regulations regarding just balances and ritual observances and prefaces both with 'Thus saith the Lord God' (Ezek.xlv.9-25). But whether it be in the realm of ritual or in that of morality sin is always regarded as the rejection of the Will of God. God confronts man with a demand and man refuses. This is SIN.

b. SIN AND ITS RESULTS.

To refuse the demand of God is to interrupt the ideal relationship between man and God and to break the Covenant. This rouses the anger of God and brings inevitable results. Among the results of refusing God's demand the Old Testament includes:-

i. Punishment. The story of Sodom (Gen. xviii), the Golden Calf (Ex.xxxii), the defeat of Ai (Josh.vii) are obvious examples. Judges ix. 56 is even more explicit 'And all the wickedness of the men of Shechem did God requite upon their heads'. One should also notice I. Sam.xxiv.12, Amos iii.2 and Ezek. xxv.14.

ii. This punishment often takes the form of suffering.

The story of the Fall (Gen.iii) sums up a message which is found throughout the Old Testament and particularly in the writings of the prophets. Adam and Eve are driven out of the garden and the toil of the field and the pain of childbirth are involved. Amos (iv.6-12) prophesies famine, drought, pestilence, destruction of the harvest and defeat in war. Hosea declares 'I will punish them for their ways....and they shall eat and not have enough' (iv.9.10). 'Israel hath cast off that which is good; the enemy shall pursue Him (viii.3). Cf. also Micah iii.10-12). The suffering includes that of innocent people, involved in others wrong.

iii. Guilt. When sin has been committed the sinner is in a state of guilt. Abimelech complains to Isaac that his actions might easily have made guilt to fall upon his people 'Thou shouldest have brought guiltiness upon us' (Gen.xxvi.10). Cf. also Prov.xiv.9, Jer. 11.5, Lev. v.19).

iv. There is a hardening of the heart.

Sihon would not let the people pass so 'the Lord hardened

his spirit' (Deut.ii.30). Zedekiah would not listen to the word of God through the prophet so God 'hardened his heart from turning unto the Lord' (2 Chron.xxxvi.13).

v. Death. Ezekiel is most explicit here 'The soul that sinneth it shall die' (xviii.4) but cf. also Gen.iii.3. and Lev.xxii.9 amongst other examples.

The most serious consequence of sin however is that it breaks the fellowship of the Covenant and interrupts the at-one-ness with God. The driving out of Adam and Eve from Eden in Gen.iii. symbolises the message of the whole Old Testament. The consequence of Samson's sin is that the 'Lord departs from him' (Judg.xvi.20). cf. Exod.xxxii.33. 'Whosoever hath sinned against me him will I blot out of my book'.

The whole of the Old Testament teaches the seriousness of sin, and 'its deepest thinkers, men like Jeremiah, Ezekiel and the writer of the 51st Psalm, see that this sinfulness goes so deep that man's only hope is that God will make him over again' (Ryder Smith p.41).

c. THE TERMS USED.

When we come to ~~examine~~ the terms used for sin in the Old Testament we find the meaning of sin as stated above confirmed. Gottfried Quell in Kittel's 'Theologisches Worterbuch zum Neuen Testament' (trans. J. R. Coates) points out that there are a great many terms used for sin in the Old Testament. He distinguishes however four roots and it will be convenient to use that classification for our investigation.

i. ht'. Literally this term means 'missing the mark' and the idea is that of making a mistake. There are a few places where it is used in the literal sense as, for example, Prov.xix.2 'miseth his way'(RV marg). and Jdg.xx.16. a reference to slingers who 'could sling at a hair-breath and not miss'. The literal use of the term is however extremely rare. It comes to be applied to all wrong-doing with the definite implication that the wicked man misses the mark because he chooses to aim at a wrong one. He misses the right path because he deliberately chooses to go another way. There is no question of an innocent mistake. Throughout all the uses of this term there is the idea that in sinning or 'missing the mark' a man is responsible. There is a choice. The emphasis is on the positive refusal of obedience. The word occurs more than five hundred times to refer to sin against God. A few examples of its use are as follows:-

Exod.x.16.(J) Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron in haste; and he said, 'I have sinned against the Lord your God and against you'.
Is.i.18. 'Though your sins be as scarlet they shall be as white as snow'.
Is.xliv.22. 'I have blotted out as a cloud thy sins'.
Ps.xxxii.5. 'I have acknowledged my sin unto thee'.
Prov.xiv.34. 'Sin is a reproach to any people'.

ii. psh'. The literal meaning here is positive 'rebellion'. Quell says 'It is a wilful breaking of a relationship of loyalty and peace' (Coates p.10). Its use can be illustrated from II.Kings i.I. where it is used to describe the revolt of Mesha of Moab against Israel. This is the characteristic word of the prophets. All sin is rebellion. When Israel 'sins' it means that she is deliberately rebelling against the revealed will of God, and rejecting it. Examples of its use are I.Ki.viii.50 'all their transgressions wherein they have transgressed against thee'. Is.i.2. 'I have nourished and brought up children and they have rebelled against me'. Jer.ii.8 the shepherds also transgressed against me (Rv.marg).

ii.29. Ye all have transgressed against me, saith the Lord.

iii. shghh. Literally this term refers not to culpable negligence but to ignorance. It implies the right intention with circumstances making a man go wrong. 'Getting off the track' is perhaps the nearest rendering. Yet even here the literal use is extremely rare and there is always the idea of responsibility. Isaiah uses the term in the illustration of a wandering drunkard who is not responsible for the paths of his feet. On the other hand he does imply that the man is responsible for getting drunk. (Is.xxviii. 7). Other examples are:

I.Sam.xxvi.21. I have played the fool and have erred exceedingly.

Ps. cxix.21. Thou hast rebuked the proud...which do wander from thy commandments.

118. Thou hast set at nought all them that err from thy statutes.

Prov.v.23. In the greatness of his folly he shall go astray.

iv. awon. Again the literal idea is 'to miss the way'. From the fact however that this is the strongest religious term and carries with it also the idea of guilt, it is clear that the missing of the way is deliberate. It is almost always rendered in R.V. by 'iniquity'. I.Sam.iii.13. 'I will judge his house for the iniquity that he knew'. Is.i.4. 'A people laden with iniquity'. Is.liii.6. 'The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all'. The context of these and other passages reveals that this 'iniquity' carries guilt with it.

A study of these terms and the contexts in which they are used leads to one conclusion and one conclusion only. Sin in Old Testament terminology is what we have already seen it to be, the deliberate rejection of the known Will of God, the refusal to respond to God's Manifestation of Himself. In every term there is the idea of responsibility. A man has 'missed the mark', 'gone astray', 'missed the way' because he has chosen to do so. All sin is therefore rebellion. To quote Quell once again 'The demand of God's Will is recognised. This is how sin differs from every other kind of failure....he has broken God's rule'. (op.cit. p.17).

d. FROM OLD TESTAMENT TO NEW.

The chief words used to translate these Hebrew roots into the Greek of the LXX are as follows. ἀσκήδ, ἀσκήδ and κακήδ and their cognates carry in themselves the idea of disobedience of a righteous God, breaking His laws and deliberate evil. ἀσκήδ suggests that there is something diseased, 'out of joint', in the man who sins. ἀσκήδ in Greek usage means to 'fail' 'miss' or 'mistake' and the LXX uses it to describe wrongdoing in the moral sense and to 'indicate guilt as the outcome of an evil will, an evil purpose, i.e. of a conscious rebellion against God' (Stahlin. Kittel trans. Coates. p.48). These and other terms used such as ἀπειθήναι and ἀνυπακούειν show a faithfulness to the Old Testament idea of sin as we have outlined above. The Seventy who turned the Old Testament into Greek were in no doubt that sin was the deliberate refusal of God's Will - a rejection of God's Manifestation of Himself - by the nation and by the individual.

All lines of investigation therefore lead to one position. The Old Testament regards sin as a refusal to respond to God's declared Will and those who interpret the Old Testament, either in translation into Greek or in the Judaistic development of Old Testament religion (which we shall examine later), keep faith with that fundamental concept. God reveals Himself and makes a demand. Man refuses to respond. That is sin. The sin breaks the Covenant relationship between man and God. How can that relationship, when broken, be restored?

C. THE RELATIONSHIP RESTORED.

We have seen that, according to the Old Testament, sin interrupts the ideal Covenant relationship between man and God, and breaks the 'at-one-ness'. To deal with this situation the Old Testament proclaims that the relationship can be restored. J.F. Bethune Baker after examining the various terms used for forgiveness, goes on to say 'in nearly all cases the context implies....that the offender is placed again in the position which he occupied before the offence, in the old Covenant relation to God'. This statement can be illustrated from such passages as Deut.xxx. After the stern denunciations of Deuteronomy xxix, where the anger of the Lord brings the curse on those who forsake the Covenant, comes the hope of Deut.xxx. 'When thou shalt return unto the Lord thy God, and shalt obey His voice.... then the Lord thy God will turn thy captivity and have compassion upon thee and will return and gather thee from all the peoples (vv.2.3.). Isaiah. (i.18) proclaims the removal of the cause of separation from God 'though your sins be as scarlet they shall be white as snow'. This is indeed a common theme of the prophets.

Hosea's great passage in ii.10-23 speaks of this very theme and promises a door of hope for the valley of Achor 'and she shall make answer there as in the days of her youth and as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt' (ii.15). The old betrothal

metaphor is used again (ii.19) and the promise made to the people who are not God's people because of their disobedience that they shall once again hear the word 'Thou art my people' and respond 'Thou art my God' (ii.23). Deutero-Isaiah makes the explicit promise 'Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord and He will have mercy upon Him, and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon' (lv.7). Zechariah also echoes the same word 'I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee' (iii.4) and Jeremiah's message of the Covenant of the heart (xxxix.31-34) implies a restored fellowship of the most intimate nature.

The restoration of the old relationship is not only proclaimed as possible. It is constantly stated that it is God's wish that it should be restored. God wants to forgive. The very nature of God is shown to be that of a God who wants to forgive. 'The Lord, a God full of compassion and gracious, slow to anger and plenteous in mercy and truth; keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin' (Exod.xxxiv.6.7. cf.Num.xiv.18). 'Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? He retaineth not his anger for ever, because He delighteth in mercy. He will turn again and have compassion upon us; He will tread our iniquities under foot; thou wilt cast all their sins into the depth of the sea' (Mic.vii.18.19). He will forgive because He is that kind of God. The prophets plead with men. God will forgive the wicked if they will repent and He will restore them to fellowship with Himself. The whole purpose of His sending the prophets is because He wants to forgive. The prayer of Solomon at the Dedication of the Temple recognises this (I.Ki.viii.23-53), the passages already quoted from Deut.xxx and Hosea ii. reveal it and it is also seen in Jeremiah vii. 23-25 where the appeal of the prophets is linked with the call to be once again God's people. Ezekiel has the same emphasis 'Return ye and turn yourselves from all your transgressions, so iniquity shall not be your ruin. Cast away from you all your transgressions, wherein ye have transgressed, and make you a new heart and a new spirit; for why will ye die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God; wherefore turn yourselves and live' (xviii.30-32). The Psalms are full of the same theme as illustrated by Psalm li. with its implications that God is willing to forgive and such passages as Psalm lxxxvi.5. 'For thou, Lord art good and ready to forgive, and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon Thee' (cf.Ps.32.5).

The passages quoted show that this theme was the message at all periods, coming to its climax in the period of the great prophets. It is an axiom of the Old Testament that not only is forgiveness, a restored relationship, possible but that God is willing and eager to forgive. We have therefore to examine the way in which this desire of God is to be realised.

I. MAN'S PART IN FORGIVENESS.

a. REPENTANCE.

Although in the Old Testament the Divine initiative is the basic fact, in every instance where forgiveness is offered it is dependent upon repentance. Man must realise that he has done wrong - that he has disobeyed. This can be illustrated from the passages already quoted and from such stories as Nathan and David (2 Sam.xii.1-16). Man must be willing to 'turn', to 'return to the Lord', to 'forsake' his evil ways. This is always prominent. Under the sacrificial system the repentance is represented by the sacrifice which is offered by the offender through the priest. There can be no restored relationship without man's realising that he has done wrong, being sorry for it, and turning from it.

b. THE ACCEPTANCE OF GOD'S DEMAND FOR OBEDIENCE.

If repentance can be described as a turning 'from' there must also be a turning 'to'. The negative forsaking of sin must be followed by a positive returning to the Lord. All the passages already quoted and such Psalms as xl and xxxii imply that an intention of obedience in the future is demanded as a condition for forgiveness. Man must respond to God's Will. If the relationship is to be restored, the demand that was refused in the past must be accepted in the future. Man, having turned from his sin, is once again in an existential situation - face to face with the manifestation of God. Again this means crisis. Forgiveness depends upon man's response to God's demand.

c. THE SACRIFICIAL SYSTEM.

It will be convenient to consider here the Sacrificial System representing as it did a manifestation of God's Will and providing God's ordained way to a renewal of the Covenant relationship. Sacrifices were common in Israel long before the Exile and were offered with varying motives, some of which Israel held in common with other peoples. It was however the experience of the Exile which led to the development of the Sacrificial system in all its fulness. This fact is very significant. Oesterley has examined the Exile experience in 'Hebrew Religion' and concludes 'the experience of the exiles representing the nation, banished from the centre of worship, was the most signal mark of divine disfavour which could only be explained by the recognition of national sin' (p.296). This new sense of sin, he says elsewhere, had more to do with the development of the sacrificial system than anything else (Sacrifice in Israel p.216). The whole sacrificial system therefore was based on the restoration of right relationships with God. It was the way in which man, being repentant and willing to turn, could do his part to restore the broken fellowship.

We turn then to examine some of the relevant sacrifices in this connection.

i. The Burnt Offering (olah).

One of the most noticeable things about the sacrificial system is the way in which the Burnt Offering, common in earlier days, increased in importance after the Exile. It becomes central in worship, so much so that the altar is now called 'the altar of burnt offering'. It is offered twice daily instead of once as formerly and offerings are prescribed even for the poor, so that all can partake. The whole animal was burned after the sprinkling of the blood around the altar and although the ideas of 'gift' and 'adoration' are present it is primarily 'the atoning sacrifice par excellence' (Oesterley. Sacrifice in Israel p.221). - see Lev. i.vv 3-9. Its purpose is for a general atonement as against the specific sins provided for in the other sacrifices. Other references to this offering can be found in Lev.xiv.20 xvi. 24.

ii. The Sin-Offering (chattah).

This was intended to 'cover' or 'remove' unwitting sins (Lev.iv. and v. Num.xv. 22-36) but it comes to be applied also to deliberate sin. The instances in Lev.vi.1-7 are not examples of unwitting sins. Lev.xii. prescribes the sin-offering after childbirth and Lev.xv. after sexual intercourse, neither of which can be described as 'unwitting sins'. Lev.v.1-13 prescribes the sin-offering for such sins as touching the unclean, refusal to bear witness and rash swearing.

In this sacrifice the ritual involved the imposition of hands by the offerer and the sprinkling of the blood before the veil, on the horns of the altar, and at the base of the altar. The choice portions and fat were burned on the altar, the skin, entrails and ordinary flesh were burned 'without the camp' and the remaining portions eaten by the priests when the offering did not concern themselves. N. H. Snaith (Mercy and Sacrifice) says that the sin-offering was largely for minor offences 'the main point being that apart from the portions burned on the altar to God, the animal was removed from sight, taken away, and with it the sin was taken away and removed'. (p.110).

iii. The Guilt or Trespass Offering (Asham).

This was mainly for the appropriation of property. The worshipper offered a ram in addition to making restitution, plus one-fifth of the value involved. There was no application of blood to the altar which suggests that the idea behind it was compensation for injury rather than atonement for sin. It was of early origin and an instance of its use can be found in I.Sam.vi. in connection with the return of the Ark from the country of the Philistines.

iv. The Peace Offering (Shelem).

The Peace Offering ritual differed from the other sacrifices in that only a part (the fat and the blood) was given to the altar. The rest of the animal was eaten at a sacrificial meal. This suggests that the Peace Offering was of the nature of a communion sacrifice although Snaith (op cit 111) says it was not a common meal with God. He thinks the idea was that the animal being consecrated was now holy food so that the worshippers were partaking of the life of God in eating it. It is however difficult to avoid the conclusion that the idea of making 'at-one-ment' was prominent even in this sacrifice. The occasions when it was practised usually have the background of indebtedness for favours received or recompense for offences committed. It is quite clear that the effect of the Peace Offering was to restore right relations with God. The post-exilic account in Lev.iii. emphasises the details from an 'atonement' point of view. It is impossible not to see in the imposition of hands and above all in the sprinkling of the blood references to the at-one-ment. It should be noted that this offering is used particularly for solemn occasions - the golden calf (Ex.xxxii.6) after the defeat of Ammon (I.Sam.xi.15), the bringing of the Ark to Jerusalem (2 Sam.vi.17.18) and by Ahaz after the defeat of Damascus (2 Ki.xvi.13).

v. The Day of Atonement.

The ritual of the Day of Atonement is described in Lev.xvi. - a short account in verses 3 to 10 and a more detailed one in verses 11 to 28. Five animals are involved - a bullock, two goats and two rams. The High Priest in 'holy garments' of linen first presented the bullock and slew it as a sin-offering for himself and his house. He took incense and the blood and entered the Holy of Holies, burning incense so that it covered the Mercy Seat and sprinkled the blood seven times around and upon the Mercy Seat. Returning to the court he slew one goat and took its blood into the Holy of Holies, sprinkling it seven times for the sins of the whole people and for the shrine. He next confessed the sins of the people over the other goat on which he laid his hands. This goat was driven away into the wilderness for Azazel, an evil spirit which lurked there. The man who led the goat away was accounted to be unclean. The High Priest then put on his official coloured robes and offered the two rams, one as a burnt offering for himself and his house and the other for the people. The bodies of the bullock and the slain goat were carried outside the camp, the fat having been first burned upon the altar. The man who removed the bodies was accounted unclean.

Many of the ideas behind this ritual may be described as pre-exilic but the post-exilic emphasis is here - confession of sins and a greater emphasis on Atonement. However one may try to explain the sending of the goat into the wilderness to Azazel, the implication for the people, after the confession and laying on of hands, is that 'our sins have gone'. That this was understood about the whole ritual is seen from the Mishnic treatise 'Yoma' (The Day) quoted by Driver and White in the HDB Article on 'Day of Atonement'. Before slaying the sin-offering for himself the priest says,

'I beseech Thee, O Lord, I have done iniquitously, I have transgressed, I have sinned before Thee, I, and my house, and the sons of Aaron, Thy holy people.

'I beseech Thee, O Lord, forgive (רָחֵם) now the iniquities and the transgressions and the sins wherein I have done iniquitously and transgressed and sinned before Thee, I and my house and the sons of Aaron, Thy holy people' (Yoma iv.2).

A similar prayer is also offered for the people. It should be noted however that the performing of the ritual of the Day of Atonement implied repentance on the part of the worshipper.

'Death and the Day of Atonement work atonement, where there is repentance. Repentance makes atonement for slight transgressions both of omission and commission, and in the case of grave ones it suspends punishment till the Day of Atonement comes and brings atonement. If a man says 'I will sin and then repent', heaven does not give him the means of practising repentance, and if he says 'I will sin and the Day of Atonement will bring atonement'; the Day of Atonement will bring him no atonement' (Yoma viii.8-9).

The Day of Atonement therefore is a supreme instance of restoring the broken fellowship between man and God but it is dependent upon man turning from his sin and responding to God.

d. THE MEANING OF THE SACRIFICES.

Oesterley (Sacrifice in Israel p.219) has summed up the meaning of the Sacrificial System in the words 'The outstanding characteristic of post-exilic sacrifices was their purpose of atonement, and thus, reconciliation with God. To establish normal relations could only be brought about by national and individual sins being atoned for'. The sacrifices were not merely a means of communion with God - above all else they were a means of restoring a communion which had been broken. This is particularly clear in the ritual of the Sin Offering and the Day of Atonement but it applies to all the sacrifices. The emphasis is on expiation. Sin has broken the 'at-one-ness' of the Covenant relation. It remains as a barrier and has to be removed. God has ordained that it shall be removed by sacrifices.

If the question were asked 'How do the sacrifices restore a broken relationship?', the only answer that could be given would be 'God has ordained it so'. There is no attempt at an explanation of the sacrifices. The sacrificial system grew up from a study of the Law. It was instituted because it was believed that Jahveh had commanded it. This is the way in which Jahveh has ordained that He shall be approached. Forgiveness depends upon the carrying out of His declared Will. To say that 'God ordains it' is sufficient explanation. This, of course, in simpler terms is again the response of obedience. Obedience includes the sacrificial system. The sacrificial system is a manifestation of God's Will. The meaning of the sacrifices is therefore that man obeys God in order that his sins may be removed.

One must also notice that there are at the same time traces in the Old Testament of a shorter road to God which by-pass the sacrificial system (e.g. in the Psalms). This 'non-conformist' approach may have links with the re-thinking which is characteristic of Qumran at which we shall have to look later.

e. TWO TERMS EXAMINED.

Two terms are prominent in the accounts of the Sacrificial System.

i. The Blood.

In every sacrifice when blood is involved it is given to God. Whether it be the Burnt Offering (Lev.i.5), the Peace Offering (Lev.iii.2.7), the Guilt Offering (Lev.vii.12) or the Sin Offering (Lev.viii.14.15) the blood is sprinkled at the altar and the sprinkling linked with atonement. There is no doubt that the central idea is that blood effects atonement. No explanation is offered except the very tentative one in Lev.xvii.II. 'For the life of the flesh is in the blood and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that maketh atonement by reason of the life'.

Does this mean that by the sacrifice of life new life is 'given to God'? Does it give us a hint of vicarious suffering so that we can say that a life is given in substitution for the life of the sinner? Or is Lods right (Les Prophetes p.334) when he suggests that the blood being holy confers or restores holiness? It would be dangerous to draw out implications too far. The Hebrew would once again have said 'The blood effects atonement because Jahveh ordains it so'.

We cannot help seeing however in the references to blood a strong link with the idea of Covenant. Exod.xxiv. has already been quoted to illustrate the blood bond between Jahveh and His people. Whenever blood is offered upon the altar it symbolises the Covenant idea - its institution or its renewal when broken.

Whatever interpretations we may bring to the blood-symbolism two things stand out - God has ordained it and it is connected with the Covenant.

ii. Kipper.

The derivation of this word and the various ways of translating it have been reviewed by G. B. Gray in his 'Sacrifice in the Old Testament'. After considering the links with Arabic, Assyrian and Babylonian, and considering the various renderings 'to cover', 'to wipe off', 'to wipe clean', to 'make at one'

Gray concludes that the root meaning involves both the ideas of 'cover' and 'remove' and suggests that in its technical sense it is best rendered by 'to make expiation for'. (p.73).

The phrase is used frequently in the Old Testament and often with reference to other things than the sacrificial system. Commenting on Genesis xxxii.20, the story of Jacob and Esau, Gray says 'To cover the face of an angry or wronged person was a Hebrew way of saying 'to get an angry or wronged person to overlook the wrong committed' and so to look with favour again upon the person who had committed the wrong' (p.68). We also notice that the word is used in the ritual for cleansing a leper's house (Lev.xiv.53), for the half-shekel paid by every Israelite (Ex.xxx.15f) and that Moses makes 'atonement' by prayer (Ex.xxxii.30).

The use of 'kipper' is chiefly however in connection with the sacrificial system, in fact Gray declares that other uses are comparatively unimportant. (p.76). It is used most often of the Sin Offerings but also of Burnt Offerings (Lev.1.4), all the blood in sacrifices (xvii.II) and for all the sacrifices (Ezek.xlv.17). The phrase in the post-exilic literature is usually 'to make atonement for a man' (Lev.i.4.xvii.II) and implies a change in the relation of a man or people to God. By the sacrifice uncleanness, sin is 'removed', 'wiped away'. It is no longer a barrier and man can enter again into fellowship with God. The priest in the sacrifice makes 'at-one-ment' by annulling the separation resulting from a broken Covenant. The sacrifice is therefore the sacrament of forgiveness and restores the Covenant relationship. The Hebrew brings a costly thing to God in token of his repentance and desire to renew the Covenant and God accepts it.

Man's part then, in restoring the broken relationship, is a response to the demand of God. He is to repent for the past, to obey in the future, and to accept God's provision for the restoration of the Covenant relationship in the sacrificial system. Expressed more simply, it is the earlier theme restated - man must respond to the Manifestation of God.

2. GOD'S PART IN FORGIVENESS.

a. THE DIVINE INITIATIVE.

Alongside the prescribed way for man to come back into the Covenant relationship with God there is the theme of God's part in making restoration possible. So far as the Old Testament is concerned we must describe it as the feeling after a doctrine rather than a doctrine itself. For the fullness of doctrine we must go to the New Testament. There is however the implication in the Old Testament that man cannot save himself even by accepting the demands to repent and obey and sacrifice. There is something to be done which only God can do.

It cannot be too strongly emphasised that throughout the Old Testament the initiative is always with God. It is God, of His free Grace, who chooses Israel and institutes the Covenant relationship. When that relationship is broken it is God who provides the means in the sacrificial system for its restoration. Man approaches God in penitence but finds that God Himself has provided the only way back.

b. REDEMPTION.

It will be convenient here to consider the conception of Redemption. Two Hebrew words are involved.. Padhah and ga'al. The English R.V. is not always consistent in its translation of these words by 'ransom' and 'redeem' respectively, but both of them are used to describe the delivering activity of God in Israel's history.

Padhah is best translated 'ransom' and its original use is of a slave set free by money payment. An example of its literal use is found in Ex.xxi.8. 'If she please not her master who hath espoused her to himself, then shall he let her be redeemed'. It is used of Israel's deliverance at the time of the Exodus e.g. Deut.vii.8. 'The Lord....redeemed you out of the house of bondage' and Micah.vi. 4 'I brought thee up out of the land of Egypt and redeemed thee out of the house of bondage'. It is also used of deliverance from Exile e.g. Is.li.II. 'The ransomed of the Lord shall return'. This term, however, is only used once in connection with sin - in Psalm cxxx.8 'He shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities'.

Ga'al, best translated 'redeem' has its literal use illustrated in Ruth iii.13 'let him do a kinsman's part' referring to the obligation which fell on the kinsman of a dead Hebrew to redeem his mortgaged lands, and if he die childless, to save his family from extinction by marrying his widow. Jahveh is regarded as the kinsman of Israel and as such will do a kinsman's part towards her. The word is used of the delivering activity of God in the history of Israel (Is.xxix.22. Ps.lxxvii.15. Ps.lxxii.14). It is freely used of the deliverance from Egypt e.g. Ex.xv. 13 'Thou in Thy mercy hast led the people which thou hast redeemed' (the Song of Moses) and from the Exile e.g. Mic.iv.10. 'the Lord redeem thee from the hand of thine enemies'. Is.xliii.I. 'Fear not for I have redeemed thee'. There is also the reference to deliverance from death in Hos.xiii.14 'I will redeem them from death' and from evil in Gen.xlviii.16 'The angel which hath redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads'. Deutero-Isaiah uses the term in connection with sin e.g. xlv. 2-23 'I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and as a cloud thy sins, return unto me, for I have redeemed thee'. The

connection with sin is made but not examined or explained. In each case the word 'redeem' can be literally translated 'to do a kinsman's part'.

The whole idea behind the use of the term is that a kinsman will do for a man something which that man cannot do for himself. It will also cost the kinsman something to do it. When the word 'redeem' is used in connection with sin the inference is unmistakeable - God will do something for man which he cannot do for himself. Deutero-Isaiah is constantly referring to God as 'Redeemer' e.g. Is.xli.14. 'Thy Redeemer is the Holy one of Israel' and compare xlv.6.24. xlvii. 4. xlviii.17. xlix.7.26. liv.5.8. lix.20. lx.16. lxiii.16. God is the kinsman of Israel and He will do a kinsman's part. The connection once again is made without any attempt at explanation.

c. THE SUFFERING SERVANT.

It is difficult to consider the passage referred to above (Is.xliv) without having in mind the picture of the Servant of the Lord in the so-called 'Servant Songs' and especially in Is.liii. It is not relevant to our purpose to enter into the discussion as to the identity of the Servant - whether he is thought of as a community or as an individual, and if an individual which particular one. We have simply to notice that the main theme of Is.liii. is that it is possible to suffer for other peoples' sins and by suffering to save them. It is vicarious suffering which ends in victory. When one remembers the words of Is. lxiii.9. 'In all their affliction he was afflicted and the angel of His presence saved them, in his love and in his pity he redeemed them' it is not difficult to see how readily the early Church turned to this passage as an apt description of the work of its Lord. There is no suggestion that the Suffering Servant is God Himself but to those who had witnessed the life, death and resurrection of Jesus the idea of Redemption is easily linked with the idea of the Servant. No kinsman can do a kinsman's part without it costing something and although the Old Testament does not explain what it costs God to redeem, the material for a doctrine is there.

d. THE NEW COVENANT.

The men of the Old Testament who saw deepest into the nature of things also realised that the demand for repentance and the observance of the sacrificial system was not enough. The writer of Psalm li not only acknowledged his transgression, he prayed for the creation of a clean heart within him. That was something which only God could do. Jeremiah's message of the Covenant of the heart is in answer to that plea. There is need, not only for a turning on the part of man, but for a bad man to be made into a good man. That is something which only God can do. God must draw

near to man not only as 'revealer' but as 'Saviour'. Whilst the Old Testament emphasises God's desire to forgive and states very often that God's forgiveness is there for men who will repent, it also implies that for a full restoration of fellowship with God something more is needed. The Old Testament message of forgiveness may be a great message but it is incomplete. Before it can be said 'They shall all know me' God must establish the Covenant of the heart (Jer.xxxi).

e. THE TERMS USED.

There are three principal roots here

i. slch. which is always used of God's forgiveness. God forgives the murmuring of Israel in the wilderness. 'and the Lord said 'I have pardoned according to thy word' (Num.xiv.20). A connection is implied with repentance e.g. the wicked man must respond before the relationship can be restored 'Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord and he will have mercy upon him and to our God for he will abundantly pardon' (Is.lv.7). cf. Psalm ciii.3 'who forgiveth all thine iniquities'. The noun for forgiveness occurs once viz. Ps.cxxx.4. 'There is forgiveness with Thee'.

ii. ns. The original meaning here is 'to carry' or to 'bear away'. It is a term frequently used but not often with the simple sense of pardon. It may be used of an unforgiven man who must 'bear his iniquity' e.g. Lev.v.1. 'If anyone sin, in that he heareth the voice of adjuration, he being a witness, whether he hath seen or known, if he do not utter it, then he shall bear his iniquity'. cf. Ezek.xiv.10. It can be used also of a man who forgives another by bearing the burden of the wrong that the man has done to him e.g. Gen.1.17. 'So shall ye say unto Joseph, Forgive, I pray thee now, the transgression of thy brethren and their sin, for that they did unto thee evil'. Exod.x.16.17. 'I have sinned against the Lord your God, and against you. Now therefore forgive, I pray thee, my sin only this once and intreat the Lord your God', that He may take away from me this death only'.

The word is used of the goat which is sent out to carry away the sin of Israel on the Day of Atonement (Lev.xiv.22), and it is also used of the Servant of the Lord who 'bare the sin of many' (Is.liii). When this term is used of God's forgiveness the implication is that God forgives sins by 'bearing them away'. Other examples are,

- Ex.xxxii.32. If thou wilt forgive their sin (the prayer of Moses).
- xxxiv.7. 'forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin
- Mic.vii.18. Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity.
- Ps.xxxii.1. Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven.

iii. Kipper. We have already looked at this term in the context of the sacrificial system.

f. THE TERMS USED TRANSLATED INTO GREEK.

i. slch. is most commonly rendered in LXX. by ἡλδ' ἑκομαι, ἡλδ' ἑμὸς ἡλως. Sometimes the translators use these terms to denote spontaneous 'forgiveness' for slch does not mean 'propitiate'. e.g. Ps.xxv.11. 'Pardon mine iniquity for it is great', Ps.cxxx.4. 'There is forgiveness with thee'. cf. also Amos vii.2. Jer.v.7 (How can I pardon thee?) and Psalm ciii.3. In such passages the context shows also that God's forgiveness means no mere remission of penalty but the restoration of the fellowship of the Covenant.

ii. ns. The usual words here are ἀνιέναι to 'send back', 'remit' and ἀφίεναι to 'send away' or 'dismiss'. The noun ἀφ' ἑαίς is not used.

iii. kipper. The word ἐξῆλδ' ἑκομαι and its cognates occur 77 times for the root kpr. Whilst some of its uses can refer simply to 'forgiveness' there are instances where propitiation is involved e.g. Jacob hopes to appease Esau (Gen.xxxii.20) and David the Gibeonites (2 Sam.xxi.3), a wise man will placate an angry king (Pro.xvi.14). No rich man can buy off God's anger (Ps.xlix.6f). Examples for the term for 'simple' forgiveness occur in Psalm lxxv 1-3. 'As for our transgressions thou shalt purge them away'. lxxviii.38 'He, being full of compassion, forgave their iniquity'. Deut.xxi.8. 'Forgive O Lord thy people Israel'.

Kpr is rendered both by ἐξῆλδ' ἑκομαι and ἡλδ' ἑκομαι and it seems that in LXX ἡλδ' ἑκομαι normally means 'forgive' and ἐξῆλδ' ἑκομαι to propitiate.

g. SUMMARY.

From all the above it is clear that forgiveness in the Old Testament means the restoration of a relationship - the at-one-ness with the God of the Covenant. It is never merely 'pardon' in the sense that sin is blotted out with nothing further happening. It does not necessarily mean that a forgiven man will escape punishment. Some passages suggest that God has already punished him (Mic.vii.18. Is.lv.7. Ps.xxxii.4. xcix.8). Punishment may be mitigated but not altogether annulled (Num.xiv.11ff). Forgiveness is never the mere remission of a penalty. It can only be defined as the restoration of Covenant fellowship between man and God. This can be seen clearly in Psalm cxxx.4. 'There is forgiveness with Thee that thou mayest be feared' and 'fear' of course equals 'worship'. The meaning of the text is clearly 'There is forgiveness with Thee... that communion may be restored'. The highest point of the prophets is reached in Jeremiah xxxi. The Covenant of the heart will be given and 'they shall all know me'. This is forgiveness in the full Old Testament sense - the restoration of fellowship.

III. THE PATTERN OF MAN'S SALVATION.

It has obviously been impossible within the space of the introduction to a thesis on the Johannine writings to make a complete investigation of Old Testament theology. Our review has necessarily been brief and sketchy. We claim, however, that our investigation has shown a distinct Old Testament 'pattern'. Sin and Forgiveness are not isolated terms. They can only be understood in a context of relationships.

i. The Old Testament is supremely about the deliberate and purposive approach of God to man and especially about a particular approach to a particular people.

ii. God approaches man deliberately with the purpose of offering him the ideal relationship with his God. This relationship is 'Covenant' in which man is 'at-one' with God. Man's part is to respond to God's Will which God reveals to him through priests, kings and prophets and supremely in the events of Israel's history.

iii. When God manifests Himself to man there is always a crisis - the crisis of encounter. In an existential situation God makes a demand and man must either obey or refuse to obey.

iv. Sin is the rejection of God's Will - in other words, the rejection of God. The result of this rejection is disaster, punishment, judgment and above all else the interruption of the Covenant and the breaking of 'at-one-ness'.

v. Repentance brings man again into an existential situation. He is faced once again with the demand for the response of obedience to God's Will. This brings the possibility of the relationship being restored. Forgiveness is the act by which God restores the broken relationship and makes man 'at-one' again with God.

vi. Forgiveness implies an act of God as well as a reform of man. Only dimly understood, the idea of expiation is never far away and man begins to glimpse something of the cost of forgiveness to God.

The constantly recurring themes in this pattern are God's Manifestation of Himself - Crisis - The Sin of Rejection - the demand to 'Turn unto the Lord' - with the Promise of a restored Covenant. Through them all is the feeling after an understanding of the mystery of the bearing of sins.

IV. THE RELEVANCE OF THE PATTERN FOR THE UNDERSTANDING OF THE JOHANNINE LITERATURE.

If our former conclusions were correct we are dealing in the Johannine writings with an author who was steeped in the Old Testament and who had been very near to Jesus Himself. His

experience of Jesus would obviously have been interpreted in the categories in which he had been accustomed to think. Whilst Jesus would fit finally into no neat compartments John's approach would undoubtedly be the way in which he had understood the Scriptures.

There is no doubt that the author of the Fourth Gospel and the Johannine Epistles thought of Jesus as bringing God to man. The whole of the writings before us deal with the relationships between God and man. As John meditated over the years and tried to interpret the meaning of his own experiences of Jesus he would be likely to interpret it in Old Testament terms. Sin and Forgiveness would be understood in their Old Testament sense and, as we have seen in the Old Testament, Sin and Forgiveness can only be understood as part of a pattern.

It is our contention that although the other New Testament writers interpret Jesus and His work against the background of and in the terms of the Old Testament, John more than any other uses the Old Testament pattern of relationships. If we think of the other writers as picturing Jesus against the background of the past as a figure appears on a stage, or as the culmination of a long period of development and the fulfilment of prophecy, John more than any other writes in terms of God coming down into man's existential situation. Jesus is God manifesting Himself in a vertical descent.

No pattern can finally contain the wonder of forgiveness, or for that matter, limit the creative spirit of God, but the pattern can be the means of understanding our writer's mind and appreciating his message.

Before turning to the Johannine literature however it is necessary to turn to others who were working out the pattern of God's relationship to man. No part of the Talmud had as yet been written down but the world of John was a world in which men were thinking the Talmud. He could hardly avoid being influenced by the thoughts of the Rabbis. It is necessary therefore to take a brief glimpse at the teachings of Rabbinic Judaism.

CHAPTER III. RABBINIC JUDAISM.

- I. The Fourth Gospel and its connection with Rabbinic Judaism.

- II. Rabbinic Teaching.
 - 1. God.
 - 2. The Manifestation of God: The Torah.
 - 3. Sin.
 - 4. Forgiveness.

- III. The Pattern in Rabbinic Judaism.

CHAPTER III. SIN & FORGIVENESS IN RABBINIC JUDAISM.

In recent years scholars have turned from an almost exclusive concentration on Hellenism as the background to the Fourth Gospel and realised its strong connection with Rabbinic Judaism. It must be remembered that none of the Talmud was written down until a long time after the latest date for the Fourth Gospel. The Mishna dates from round about 200 A.D. and the Gemara at least a century later. On the other hand the Talmud represents the thinking of the Rabbis and it must be admitted that in what might be called the Johannine period it was being thought and discussed if not actually written down.

Rabbinic Judaism grew out of the movement for the re-establishing of Judaism in the time of Ezra. It was to be a reformed Judaism based upon God's revealed law. Much searching of the law was involved together with explanation and comment. Out of this quest there grew up a vast literature concerning all human thought and activity. This was finally codified in the Talmud.

I. THE FOURTH GOSPEL AND ITS CONNECTION WITH RABBINIC JUDAISM.

Scholars have pointed out the strong affinities of the Fourth Gospel with the thinking of the Rabbis. Burney (Aramaic Origin of the Fourth Gospel) went so far as to suggest that the Gospel was a translation of an Aramaic original and he was supported by Torrey and others. A. Schlatter (Der Evangelist Johannes) on the other hand discovered Hebrew rather than Aramaic idiom in the Gospel. C. H. Dodd (IFG.p.75) declares that the suggestion that the Gospel is a translation of either an Aramaic or a Hebrew original is 'entirely improbable' but goes on to say that an underlying Semitic idiom is undoubtedly there.

Lightfoot (p.47) maintains that John has a strong Semitic strain in his language and shows himself familiar with the thought and language of the Jewish Rabbis. He instances the Feast of Tabernacles (vii.viii) explaining that water, bread and light were used as descriptions of the Torah by the Rabbis. C. K. Barrett (p.27) lists John's contacts with Rabbinic ideas and includes the processes of criminal law being assumed, also the religious law concerning circumcision and the Sabbath. He quotes i.51 and viii.56 as illustrations of John's familiarity with the methods of Rabbinic exegesis, theology and mysticism. We should add that the casuistry concerning the Sabbath Law in vii.22-24 is also Rabbinic. On the other hand Barrett gives the caution that as the Talmud was not written down until later, the most that can be said is that John was familiar with the oral teaching which was later crystallised into the Mishna, Talmud and Midrashim. It remains to add that the Jewish scholar Abrahams (Cambridge Biblical Essays 1909, p.181) believed that the discourses of Jesus in the Fourth Gospel had a 'Jewish ring'.

It has also to be remembered that the Fourth Gospel is the only New Testament document which uses the Hebrew term 'Messiah' and transliterates it into the Greek 'Christos' (i.41). This title is not applied in the Old Testament to any figure expected in the future. Its use in this sense dates from Rabbinic times. C. H. Dodd (IFG p.87) quotes Abrahams in this connection (Studies in Phariseism and the Gospels). 'The name Messiah does not become common in Rabbinic usage until after the destruction of the Temple. Its application to Jesus occurs at the moment when the name began to be widely used, and the New Testament usage here, as in many other points, is parallel to Rabbinic development and forms a link in the chain'.

Enough has been said to show that there is a link between the writings we are studying and the teaching of the Jewish Rabbis. It is necessary therefore to note Rabbinic teaching on the subjects under investigation. The quotations below are mainly taken from Strack-Billerbeck 'Kommentar zum New Testament aus Talmud und Midrash', Pirke Aboth 'The Wisdom of the Fathers' (ed. Goldin) and 'Everymans' Talmud (Cohen).

II. RABBINIC TEACHING.

1. GOD.

The commonest name for God used by the Rabbis is 'the Holy One, blessed be He'. 'He is holy with all kinds of holiness i.e. He is the perfection of holiness' (p.Ber.13a). I. Epstein (Judaism p.3) says the Holiness of God means 'His transcendence, His independence of all besides Himself and his mastery over life and nature' and then quotes the thirteen attributes of Exodus xxxiv.7. Great stress is laid on the omnipresence of God and the term 'Shekinah' or 'The Indwelling' is used. 'The Shekinah is everywhere (T.Baba Bathra 25a). 'There is no place without Shekinah' (Mid,Exodus Rabbah ii.9). Yet this is no mere immanence, transcendence is also involved, 'living and existing to eternity' (Mid.Lev.Rabbah vi.6).

God's purpose is based on Lev.xix 2. 'Ye shall be holy for I the Lord, thy God am holy'. Epstein (op cit pp 6 7) says 'this has both negative and positive aspects'. The negative aspect means 'separation from whatever urge of nature makes self-seeking the essence of human life'. The positive aspect means the practice of the virtues. 'Man has the duty to respond to God's call to holiness and thus have spiritual affinity with God'.

God calls all men to be co-partners in the development of the human race. His instrument is Israel to whom He is bound by Covenant. He 'loves Israel more than angels'. 'Even sinful Israel is dear to God'. Everything is due to the mystery of God's love and grace.

Fundamentally man's duty is the imitation of God. 'As He is merciful, so be thou merciful, as He is gracious, so be thou gracious, as He is righteous, so be thou righteous' (Sifra on Lev. xix.2). This 'co-partnership' of Israel and God is based upon a relation of fellowship. 'The Holy One, blessed be He, longs for the prayer of the righteous'. Cohen (op cit p.86/7) quotes a number of prayers to show how prayer for the Hebrew is a medium for enjoying fellowship with God.

2. THE MANIFESTATION OF GOD: THE TORAH.

The word 'TORAH' stands for the whole of religion regarded as divine revelation. This applies both to the written and the oral law. The LXX uses the word 'Nomos' to render the full range of meaning of the word. It is significant that the Synoptics use 'nomos' only in the sense of the Pentateuch or law. James and Paul use it in addition in the Stoic sense of the immanent principle in the universe. The Fourth Gospel uses it according to its LXX use but never in the Greek sense.

We shall have occasion to discuss the conception of Wisdom when we come to the Gospel itself. Suffice it to say here that the Rabbis identified the Torah with the description of Wisdom found in Eccclus.xxiv. The Torah becomes divine and pre-existent - the pre-existent Will of God revealed in time. C. G. Montifiore (Peake's Comm.p.620) says it is 'the middle term between Israel and God'.

'Seven things were created before the world was created; namely, the Torah, Repentance, the Garden of Eden, Gehenna, the Throne of Glory, the Sanctuary, the Name of Messiah' (Ps.54a).

'Through the first-born God created the heaven and the earth the first-born is no other than the Torah'. (S-B)

'My daughter, she is the Torah' (S-B).

The Torah is regarded as God manifesting Himself to men. The following passages, mainly from Pirke Aboth, reveal the centrality of this conception to the Rabbis.

'Moses received the Torah on Sinai and handed it down to Joshua; Joshua to the Elders; the Elders to the prophets; the prophets handed it down to the men of the Great Assembly. They said three things - Be deliberate in judgment; raise up many disciples, and make a fence around the Torah' (i.1).

'Upon three things the world is based; upon the Torah, upon divine worship and upon acts of benevolence' (i.2).

'The more Torah, the more life... He who has acquired for himself words of Torah has acquired for himself life in the world to come' (i.118).

'Whosoever labours in the Torah for its own sake merits many things; and not only so, but the whole world is indebted to him. He is called friend, beloved, a lover of the All-Present, a lover of mankind' (vi.1).

'Great is the Torah which gives life to those that practise it in this world and in the world to come' (vi.7).

'Were it not for Torah, the heavens and the earth could not endure' (Pes 6.86).

God reveals Himself in the Torah and it is by that manifestation of God that man is confronted.

3. SIN.

'From the Rabbinic standpoint, sin is nothing more or less than rebellion against God' (Cohen. op cit.96). Virtue is regarded as conformity to the Torah and sin is simply disregard for or disobedience to the Torah. To refuse to obey the Torah is to revolt against the divine will.

'The three cardinal sins are idolatry, unchastity and bloodshed' (Sanh.74a). Later slander was added. In each case the sin is because these things are forbidden in the Torah. A wrong done to a fellow man is regarded as an offence against God.

Sin, disobedience of the Torah, causes alienation from God. (cf. Epstein p.79). It does not however make man any less the child of God. 'Through penitence and confession he makes for himself a new heart and spirit and then he is reconciled with God who in his lovingkindness vouchsafes unto him His forgiveness and pardon and recreates him in spirit and life. 'A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you' (Ezek.xxxvi.26. Epstein op cit.p.81).

It is obvious how completely different this is from St. John's message.

This brings us to the question of

4. FORGIVENESS.

With the fall of the Temple and the cessation of sacrifice, repentance and the Day of Atonement take the chief place in the teaching on forgiveness. Repentance is primary - it is one of the things created before the creation of the world (see above).



'Great is repentance for it reaches to the throne of glory' (Joma 86a). 'There is nothing greater than repentance (Deut.R.II.4)'. It is the key to reconciliation with God. 'The Holy One, blessed be He, looks to the peoples of the world, hoping that they will repent and so bring them near beneath His wings' (Num.R.x.1). It is even more important than the Day of Atonement 'Neither sin-offering nor trespass-offering nor death nor the Day of Atonement can bring expiation without repentance (Tosifta Joma v.9). When the sacrifices are finished, whence is it derived that if one repents, it is imputed to him as if he had gone up to Jerusalem, built the Temple, erected an altar and offered upon it all the sacrifices enumerated in the Torah? From the text 'The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit' (Lev.R.VII.2).

The Rabbinic 'scheme of Atonement' is seen in the following passage,

'Wisdom was asked, 'What is the penalty of a sinner?' and the reply was 'Evil pursueth sinners'. When Prophecy was asked the question it answered 'The soul that sinneth it shall die'. When the Torah was asked the question it answered 'Let him bring a trespass-offering and he will be forgiven', as it is said 'And it shall be accepted of him to make atonement for him'. When the question was asked of the Holy One, Blessed be He, He replied, 'Let him repent and he will be forgiven, as it is written 'Good and upright is the Lord, therefore will He teach sinners in the way'. (p.Mak.31.d).

There is here a four-fold scheme' - evil, death, sacrifice, repentance.

a. Evil. i.e. suffering. Suffering was regarded as a means of cleansing of sin. 'There are chastenings which purge all the iniquities of man' (Ber 5a). The suffering can also be corporate.

b. Death. 'If one transgress a positive commandment and repent, he does not move from his place without being forgiven. If one transgress a prohibition and repent, his repentance remains in suspense and the Day of Atonement brings expiation. If one commit an offence which incurs the penalty of excision (by the hand of God) or capital punishment by a Court of Law and repent, both his repentance and the Day of Atonement remain in suspense and sufferings purge him. But he who has been guilty of profaning the Name, repentance has no power of being in suspense, the Day of Atonement has no power of bringing expiation, and sufferings have not the power to purge, but they all remain in suspense and death purges him' (Joma 86a).

c. Sacrifices. When the sacrificial system of the Temple was a thing of the past the popularly accepted way to purification is the synagogue ritual of the Day of Atonement.

'For light transgressions, whether of commission or omission, repentance atones; for the serious transgressions, repentance holds the matter in suspense until the Day of Atonement comes and brings expiation' (Joma viii.8).

d. Repentance. is above all the ultimate means of cleansing man from sin. For forgiveness therefore man must play his part and repent. God does his part by providing the Day of Atonement. But the resolve to obey in the future is a necessary accompaniment of Repentance.

'If a man is guilty of transgression, make a confession of it but does not amend his behaviour, to what is he like? To a man who holds a defiling reptile in his hand. Even if he immerse his body in all the waters of the world, his immersion is of no avail to him. Let him, however, cast the reptile aside and should he immerse in forty seas of water it immediately avails him; as it is said, 'Whoso confesseth his sins and forsaketh them shall obtain mercy' (Taan 16a).

THE PATTERN IN RABBINIC TEACHING.

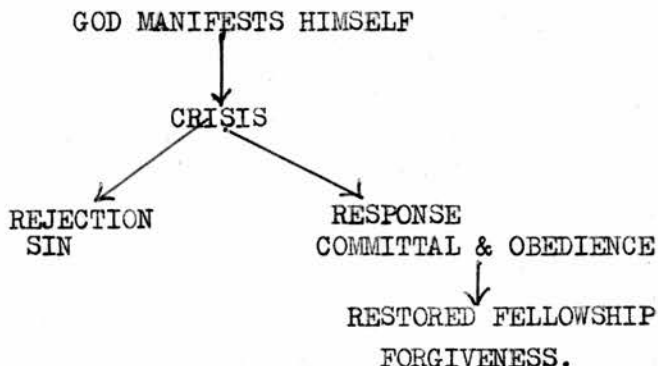
This brief review cannot, of course, take into account all the vast literature of the Talmud. It is claimed, however, that what has been quoted is characteristic of Rabbinic teaching. We have seen the close contacts between the Fourth Gospel and the teaching of the Rabbis. We can now see that a good deal of Rabbinic teaching follows the characteristic pattern of the Old Testament.

The Holy God, Blessed be He, manifests Himself to man in the Torah. Faced with this manifestation man is in a state of crisis. It is an existential encounter with God and brings a demand. The demand is to respond to God's Will revealed in the Torah. To sin is to refuse to respond. It is the deliberate rejection of the revealed Will of God and therefore rebellion against God. When man has sinned the only way to forgiveness is by repentance and obedience. Obedience includes the study of the Torah and good works. When man responds with repentance God in his mercy and grace forgives him and restores the broken Covenant relationship.

The obvious omission is of course on the subject of expiation. True, the Day of Atonement ritual is spoken of as expiatory but there is no doubt that repentance is the primary thing and regarded as sufficient. The words of Epstein (Faith of Judaism p.142) are significant 'If by straying from the right path man lapses into sin, regret and penitence will repair the ravages of his transgression and will restore harmony between him and his Creator. But for the restoration of harmony, man does not stand in need of a Mediator'.

CHAPTER IV. SUMMARY OF PART I.

In our review of the Old Testament and Rabbinic teaching we have discovered a distinctive Biblical Pattern of the relationship between God and Man. This Old Testament pattern is accepted in its fundamentals by the teaching of the Rabbis. It is a Pattern around the themes of Manifestation of God - Crisis - Rejection - Response. One might set it out diagrammatically as follows:-



This pattern applies at all periods and in all situations. It applies to 'religious' behaviour and also to human behaviour and relationships.

This is something very different from 'Progressive Revelation'. Progressive Revelation is a theory which explains a good deal of the Biblical literature but it is not the fundamental Biblical standpoint. The Biblical message is of a God living and active - confronting man with a demand in the particular situation in which man finds himself. However primitive or however advanced man's thought may be of God, He is confronted by God. This is true 'Existentialism' - at any rate it is the Existentialism of the Bible and of the Christian Gospel. Every time God confronts man there occurs a crisis and according to the situation man must make a response.

SIN as a Biblical concept is the refusal of God's demand - the rejection of God's Manifestation of Himself and His Will. When a man has sinned the ideal relationship with God is impossible until he has been forgiven.

FORGIVENESS is the restoration of the old relationship. God brings a man back to the existential situation where he is faced with the demand of obedience. Only this response can lead to a restored relationship of fellowship with God.

The way to forgiveness on man's part is by repentance and obedience. He must acknowledge his rejection of God and turn from it. He must be willing to obey in the future. When man responds with repentance and committal God provides the means for restoring the relationship. In the Old Testament it is the sacrificial system. In Rabbinic Judaism it is the sacrificial system until after the destruction of the Temple and after that the Day of Atonement. In each case it is God who provides the means.

Here then we suggest is the key to St. John and his writings. John, as we have seen, was steeped in the Old Testament and familiar with the teaching of the Rabbis. It would be strange if he did not see things according to the similar pattern. But he had also had contact with Jesus and the pattern, though similar, will be different. Jesus would fit into no neat 'pattern', nor would John think of Him doing so. The pattern we have seen will undoubtedly help us but the main theme of John will be found to be, not the pattern, but the crisis of encounter with God. In Jesus men were in touch with God - the God who makes the same offer and the same demand.

To the examination of the Johannine writings we must now turn.

PART II. THE JOHANNINE CONCEPTS.

CHAPTER V. THE MANIFESTATION OF GOD.

The Background Pattern.

The Manifestation of God.

1. The LOGOS.
 - a. The Logos in Greek usage.
 - b. Jewish ideas.
 - c. Philo of Alexandria.
 - d. The Hermetic Writings.
 - e. The Johannine Prologue.
2. THE MESSIAH.
3. SON OF MAN.
4. SON OF GOD.

PART 11. THE JOHANNINE CONCEPTS.

CHAPTER V. THE MANIFESTATION OF GOD.

In turning now to the actual Johannine writings it is proposed first of all to examine briefly some of the great concepts which recur constantly. In the context of these great themes we shall examine the meaning of sin and forgiveness. It is immediately obvious that the great themes of these writings fall into the Jewish pattern which we have seen evolving.

The Background Pattern.

A number of the most familiar concepts of St. John group themselves around the idea that in Jesus God Himself is approaching man with a demand and an offer to which man must make a response. The one who hears or reads the Gospel is immediately placed in an existential situation - he is confronted by the manifestation of God. That manifestation reveals an offer and makes a demand. Man must respond in one way or another.

THE MANIFESTATION OF GOD.

1. THE LOGOS.

We are immediately confronted with the term 'Logos' and have to ask, 'What did John mean to say when he used this term at the very commencement of his Gospel?'. The word 'Logos' in Greek can mean either reason i.e. something thought or the speech which gives utterance to the thought. Its use however is exceedingly wide and as C. K. Barrett says (p.127) 'in Greek usage it is a very convenient term for describing any kind of self-expression'.

a. The Logos in Greek usage.

The term 'Logos' first comes into Greek usage in the writings of Heraclitus, probably in the first decade of the fifth century B.C. and he uses it to mean the principle of reason at work in the cosmic process. Heraclitus taught that everything in the universe is in a state of flux - one cannot step into the same river twice and nothing remains the same. On the other hand this is a dependable universe in which there is order. These two ideas are reconciled by the principle of order and reason which he calls the Logos. The Logos is eternal and all things come to be through the Logos. It is man's chief duty to be obedient.

The existing fragments of the writings of Heraclitus are quoted in James Adams 'Religious Teachers of Greece'. An examination of these fragments shows the Logos philosophy of Heraclitus.

'The Logos is always existent, but men fail to understand it both before they have heard it and when they have heard it for the first time. For although all things happen through this Logos, men seem as if they had no acquaintance with it when they make acquaintance with such words and works as I experienced' (fr.2 quot Adam.p.217).

'Men are at variance with the Logos which is their most constant companion' (fr.93 quot.p.219).

'Although the Logos is universal, most men live as if they had a private intelligence of their own' (fr.92 quot.p.219).

The Logos, to Heraclitus, is the divine reason or principle of order, immanent in both nature and in man 'a rational principle, power or being which speaks to men both from without and from within' (Adam p.222). The body of the Logos is formed by fire and as Adam says (p.233) 'the three conceptions of Logos, Fire and God are fundamentally the same'. 'Regarded as the Logos, God is the omnipresent Wisdom by which all things are steered; regarded in his physical or material aspect, that is to say, as Fire, he is the substance which creates, sustains and in the end perhaps reabsorbs into himself the world; and in both of these aspects at once he is the everchanging and yet for ever changeless unity in which all multiplicity inheres' (p.233).

After Heraclitus Greek thinking came under the influence of Anaxagoras and his doctrine of Nous as the supreme intellectual principle. Socrates used the term Logos but only to describe a general concept or idea such as justice or courage. To Plato the term Logoi stands for the plurality of ideas of which the highest is deity. The Stoics brought the conception of Logos into common use and the Stoic use is most important from the point of view of the New Testament.

The Stoics revolted against any idea of dualism in the universe and refused to distinguish between mind and matter. Everything in the world was literally God and all life was a spark of the spirit of God. The Logos was the divine principle or reason behind the universe which maintained all things. Because of the divine spark within him man had affinity with this Logos and could raise himself to contemplate it and even to enter into union with it.

To the Greek in the time of St. John the word 'Logos' was a familiar term meaning the reason or principle behind the universe 'the spiritual continuum in and behind the material world' (Strachan p.91).

b. Jewish ideas.

The word 'Logos' is used in the LXX to translate the Hebrew word 'Dabar' which always means the spoken word. A spoken word to the Hebrew was a living thing and had power to effect things. Even a human word had active power - Jacob's blessing in Genesis xxvii cannot be revoked, neither can Micah's mother's curse (Judg.xvii). A word was the projection of spiritual power from the person of him who uttered it.

The Word of God was thought of in similar terms - it was active and powerful. The Old Testament is full of illustrations of the Word of God as an active power fulfilling God's purpose. In Genesis i. the Creation of the world is the result of God's speaking - His word accomplishes creation. Other instances are as follows :-

Is.lv.11. My word... shall not return unto me void but it shall accomplish that which I Please.

Jer.xxiii. 29. The word of God is like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces.

Ps.xxxiii. 6. By the word of the Lord were the heavens made.

9. He spake and it was done.
He commanded and it stood fast.

In the Targums much is said about the divine voice or the creative Word of God. The action of Jahveh is constantly described as His 'Word' (Memra). Genesis iii.8. describes the 'Memra of God' walking in the garden in the cool of the day'. But the Targums frequently use Memra to avoid using the divine Name and anthropomorphism and C. K. Barrett may be right when he says that 'Memra is a blind alley so far as interpreting John is concerned'. Memra is never employed to express either the dynamic Word of creation or the medium of revelation.

The growth of the idea of Wisdom in Jewish thinking is however very important. The classic chapter is Proverbs viii where Wisdom is not only glorified but given a unique place. Wisdom is described as being in company with God before the World began, God's helper and agent in the work of creation. After the close of the Old Testament this conception is carried still further. Eccus.i.1-10 describes Wisdom as being created before all things and in the Wisdom of Solomon it begins to take on the character of an intermediary being, mediating between God and creation. Due no doubt to the influence of Babylonian and Persian ideas God is thought of as being so transcendent that He cannot come into contact with created things - He uses agents to effect His ends. Wisdom is described as 'the effulgence of God's glory' (Wis.vii.22) a phrase that recalls Col.1.15.

A more significant fact still is that in the period between the Testaments the Wisdom of God came to be identified with the Jewish Law or Torah and not as one might have expected with the Messiah. This is already implicit in parts of Deuteronomy (e.g. iv.1-20). In Eccles. xxiv., after a long description of the excellencies of Wisdom we read 'All these things are the book of the Covenant of the Most High God, even the law which Moses commanded us for a heritage unto the assemblies of Jacob' (v.23.24). The Law acquires in Rabbinical thought the personification given to Wisdom in Proverbs viii and the Rabbis interpreted this passage as applying to the Law. According to C. Taylor (Sayings of the Jewish Fathers) a Midrash of A.D. 120 speaks of the Law as 'the instrument with which the world was created'.

We see therefore that in Jewish thought there is a gradual development from the active Word of God and the conception of Wisdom to the personification of the Torah as God's instrument in the world.

c. Philo of Alexandria.

Philo of Alexandria, as we have seen, was a Jew who loved the Old Testament and yet tried to interpret it in terms of Hellenistic philosophy. His use of the word 'Logos' has frequently been quoted to assist in the interpretation of St. John. We have therefore to examine Philo's conception of the Logos to see if it throws any light on John's use of the word. Scholars are divided in their views on this. C.K. Barrett says that Philo has no simple or consistent doctrine, whilst C.H. Dodd describes Philo's idea of Logos as 'the thought of God formed within the Eternal Mind and projected into objectivity'. (p.277 IFG). W.F. Howard says that Philo uses the word 'Logos' thirteen hundred times with a variety of meanings and 'uses it to express the conception of a mediator between the transcendent God and the Universe, an immanent power active in creation and revelation but though the Logos is often personified, it is never truly personalised' (p.38 Xty.a/c S.Jno). McGregor suggests that Philo combines Hebrew and Greek ideas - the Logos is identified with Plato's idea of the Good and the Hebrew Idea of Wisdom.

G. F. Moore describes Philo's God as a 'metaphysical absolute'. He interposes between God and the Universe the Logoi which correspond to the Platonic ideas supposedly immanent in God and to the Stoic forces (dunamis) operative ideas immanent in matter' (p.61). As Plato comprehended all the ideas in the one supreme Idea, the Good, so does Philo find the unity of all the Logoi in the one Logos.

There are thus many conflicting opinions as to what exactly Philo means by the Logos. In considering his connection with St. John it is wisest to go to Philo himself. He gives an account of the creation of the world in the *De Opificio Mundi*. 'Now God, with no counsellor to help Him (who was there beside Him?) determined that it was meet to confer rich and unrestricted benefits upon that nature which apart from Divine bounty could obtain of itself no good thing' (Vi.23). This immediately strikes one as being very different from John's account of the beginning of things. Whatever the Logos is going to mean it is obviously not going to be the same as 'In the beginning was the Logos - the same was in the beginning with God'. The archetypal seal is the 'very Logos of God' (Vi.25). He uses Logos as the divine reason 'The incorporeal world then was now finished and firmly settled in the Divine Reason (*τῷ θεῷ λόγῳ*)'. The word Logos is also used for the reason of man 'The Creator, we know, employed for its making no pattern taken from among created things, but solely, as I have said, His own Word. It is on this account that he says that man was made a likeness and mutation of the Word, when the Divine Breath was breathed into his face' (XLVIII.139). And again 'Everyman, in respect of his mind is allied to the Divine Reason (*λόγος*) having come into being as a copy or fragment or ray of that blessed nature, but in the structure of his body he is allied to all the world (LI 146). There is also an echo of the Jewish doctrine of Wisdom 'The first man was wise with a wisdom leavened from an taught by Wisdom's own lips for he was made by divine hands' (LI 148).

If one turns to Philo's other writings one can see the same rather mixed ideas. 'A river issues from Eden to water the Garden. River is generic virtue, goodness. This issues forth out of Eden, the wisdom of God, and this is the Logos of God' (Leg. Al. i.65), and when we come to such a passage as this

'As in each of us, reason (*λόγος*) has two forms (*λόγοις*), the outward of utterance and the inward of thought, he gave them each one of the two virtues as its special property; to utterance clear showing, to the thinking mind, truth' (Vit Mos. ii.129) one feels that Philo has more in common with the Greeks than with the Hebrews.

One last passage should be quoted:-

'When the substance of the universe was without shape and figure God gave it these; when it had no definite character God moulded it into definiteness and, when He had perfected it, stamped the entire universe with His image (*εἰκόνι*) and an ideal form, (*ἰδέει*), even His own word (*λόγῳ*) (Som. ii.45).

It is impossible from statements like the above quoted to build up any coherent and definite doctrine of the Logos from Philo. One thing however is clear - it is not to Philo that we must go for help in interpreting St. John.

, d. The Hermetic Writings.

A good deal of attention has been paid recently to the Hermetic writings. Of the eighteen tractates in existence some are as late as the third century and it is extremely doubtful if any can be dated as early as the first century. It is quite impossible for John to have been influenced by the Hermetists but these writings do reveal how minds were working in an attempt to blend Greek philosophical ideas with material from the Jewish tradition.

The book of concern with reference to the Logos doctrine is the *Piromandres*. The Hermetics teach the doctrine of one supreme God. This God gives birth to three sons - Logos, Mind (Nous) and Man (Anthropos). Anthropos is the personification of the incorporeal part of man which comes from God and is destined to go back to God. Logos and Nous are God's agents in the making of the world. The Logos, described as the Son of God, separates the elements. Nous makes living beings, the heavenly bodies, etc. When the work is finished Logos and Nous coalesce into one. Turning to the *Piromandres* then we get the following:-

'From the Light there came forth a holy Word, which took its stand upon the watery substance, and we thought this Word was the voice of the Light' (1.5).

'That Light, he said, is I, even Mind, the first God, who was before the watery substance which appeared out of the darkness; and the Word which came forth from the Light is son of God'.

'How so? said I'.

'Learn my meaning, said He, by looking at what you yourself have in you; for in you too, the word is son, and the mind is father of the word. They are not separate one from the other; for life is the union of word and mind' (1.6)

'Earth and water remained in their own place, mingled together, so as not to be, but they were kept in motion by reason of the breath-like Word (*πνευματικόν λόγον*) which moved upon the face of the water' (1.8).

'The Word of God leapt up from the downward-tending elements of nature to the pure body which had been made, and was united with Mind the Maker; for the Word was of one substance with that Mind' (1.10).

The most that can be said of this picture, which recalls some of the Gnostic systems, is that the Logos is a subordinate God. We are in a different world altogether from the Prologue to the Fourth Gospel.

e. The Johannine Prologue.

We have now to estimate the extent of the foregoing influences on the thought of St. John and to ask what the Johannine doctrine of the Logos is. W. F. Howard says that nothing except the use of the term Logos in the Prologue would suggest that Greek philosophy had any influence on the Gospel (Xty. of St. John p.29). Although at first sight the Prologue to the Fourth Gospel seems philosophical in form it is not more so than such passages as Col. i.16-19. If we analyse the Prologue and predicate of the Logos the statements of the Johannine writer we must agree with the writer in Kittel's 'Worterbuch' that 'the N.T. Logos is fundamentally something different from the Hellenistic Logos speculation' (Grundsatzlich etwas anderes ist als die hellenistische Logospekulation).

Bultmann in 'Das Evangelium des Johannes' (1952) proposes to interpret the Prologue as a gnostic 'Erlösungs-mythus' (redemption myth) and introduces repeatedly his concept of 'Menschliches selbstverständnis' (human self-understanding) in his interpretation. He does elaborate the differences underlying ideas of the gnostic myth and the 'Logos made flesh' but his object is to show that the Johannine Prologue is a gnostic myth fastened on Jesus. But Bultmann completely ignores the Jewish references and makes very little reference to the Old Testament. Bernard has pointed out that in the first century the idea of a divine Logos was as widespread as the idea of evolution in more modern days. We suggest that the main debt John owes to the Greek background is the use of a familiar term.

Logos in John does not mean 'Reason' - it means Word and this immediately leads us to the Jewish tradition.

If we examine the Prologue to the Gospel it is impossible not to see the Jewish background. The opening recalls such passages as the opening of Genesis and Psalm xxxiii.6.9. and Isaiah lv.11. The doctrine of the Logos is linked up with the word *שְׁכִינָה* (Shekinah) which was frequently used as a periphrasis for the divine name. *Λόγος καὶ Σάνβειν* are linked up with the Old Testament conception of the Torah given by Moses. Dodd says (IFG.278) that John starts from the Jewish idea of Torah, as being Word and Wisdom, and finds in Greek thought and expression which combines both ideas. W.F. Howard (Xty. ac St. John pp50-51) has pointed out that in Rabbinic Judaism we find statements about the Torah which supply astonishing parallels to this Prologue and Strack Billerbeck 'Kommentar zum N.T. aus Talmud und Midrash' supplies many illustrations of this.

We have to say then that once again we have an indication that John is writing in the line of the Old Testament and Jewish tradition. But the vital point has yet to be reached. John is using an idea which has been developed through many centuries. The word 'Logos' has meaning for Jew and Greek alike. It has been used by Old Testament prophets and Greek thinkers with varying meanings to express the Reality behind the Universe in its relationships with men. The conceptions we have been considering - Word - Wisdom - Torah - are conceptions which express the activity of God. John is describing the activity of a Living God. And the Prologue to the Gospel is not a small philosophical treatise - it is an introduction to an account of a certain life. It points forward to Jesus. The early Church regarded this Life as the Word of God spoken to them in their particular situation. God is speaking to man and He speaks in Jesus. God is manifesting Himself and tabernacling among men at a particular moment in history and He does it in Jesus. This is the clearest possible indication that the message of the Gospel is a message about the Manifestation of God.

2. MESSIAH.

A vital part of the religion of the Hebrews was the expectation of the coming of God's Messiah, or anointed One. This coming was to be the fulfilment of all things and the consummation of the glory of the Covenant People. Conceptions of the Messiah and of the Messianic reign varied and developed. At first the hope of Israel was limited to the coming of a time of ideal prosperity under a Davidic king or a prophet after the pattern of Deut.18.15. When that hope was clearly impossible, the idea of a divine, super-human, pre-existent Messiah began to grow. By the time of the Book of Enoch the Messiah already existed in heaven (xlviii.3.6). When he came he would deliver God's people but his coming was delayed because of Israel's unworthiness and sin.

In the time of Jesus there were varied ideas. Elijah would first come as the herald. The Messianic Age would be ushered in with terror and with judgment. Some Rabbis taught that the Jews only were concerned - others envisaged all humanity being affected. The Dead Sea Scrolls envisage the possibility of two Messiahs - one religious, one political. It is impossible to trace and review all the many conceptions which were prevalent.

One thing however is clear. The expectation of Messiah was common to all. Messiah would come and his coming would be the Act of God. In whatever form the Messiah came his coming would be God invading history. As. R.A. Edwards puts it 'it was the focal point of the whole revelation of the active God'. (Gospel according to John p.21). When men spoke of the Messianic Age they referred to the time when God would act. When they referred to the Messiah they spoke of someone in whom God would manifest Himself.

There is no doubt that Jesus accepted the title of Messiah and led His disciples to think of Him as such. Although His conception of Messiahship was not that of the Jewish people He clearly regarded Himself as the 'One who should come'. Nowhere is that more evident than in the writings of St. John. The actual term 'Messiah' is only used twice in the New Testament and both instances are in St. John (i.41.iv.25). The Greek word Christos is frequently used however and it is significant that its use is more prominent in the Johannine writings than anywhere else. John explicitly states that his gospel has been written with the sole purpose that his readers may believe that 'Jesus is the Christ' (xx.31), and his whole story moves in a Messianic atmosphere. The word Christos is used by John no fewer than 28 times (18 in the Gospel and 10 in the Epistles) as compared with 13 times in Mathew where we should expect many more, 6 times in Mark and 11 times in Luke.

It is clear that John is seeking to stress, even more than the other Evangelists, the fact that in Jesus God is manifesting Himself to Man.

3. SON OF MAN.

The designation 'Son of Man' belongs to all the Gospels as the favourite title of Jesus ~~for~~ Himself. It is necessary therefore to ask what it meant. In common Hebrew or Aramaic speech it originally meant no more than a 'member of the human race' but certain apocalyptic associations had made it come to mean much more. C. H. Dodd (IFG) says that there is little evidence to show that in pre-Christian Judaism it was used as a Messianic title. He draws attention to the fact that in Daniel vii.13 the Son of Man is described as 'the people of the saints of the most high' and although he admits the Apocalypse of Ezra links the Son of Man with the Messiah (xii.32) he quotes Moore as saying 'the Messiah is a symbol not a person' (Judaism 11.338). Dodd goes on to say that the statements about the Son of Man in the Fourth Gospel recall the figure of the heavenly Anthropos in the Hellenistic documents - the idea of a being who is the archetype of the human race, the offspring of the Supreme Being and destined to be reunited with Him (243-4). Dodd admits 'it is no long step to say that He is the real or archetypal man, or the Platonic idea of Man' although he points out that there is a vital difference - John is speaking of a real person and not a metaphysical abstraction (248).

Not everyone however would subscribe to Dr. Dodd's conclusion that the phrase 'son of Man' was not a Messianic title. In the Book of Enoch for example there is described a pre-existent figure designated as 'that Son of Man'. He is waiting in heaven until the day comes when God will send him upon earth to break the enemies of God and His people. Chapter xlvi. recalls the words of the Magnificat.

'He shall raise up kings and the might from their seats
And the strong from their thrones
And shall loosen the reins of the strong
And shall break the teeth of sinners
And he shall put down the kings from their thrones and
kingdoms (xlvi.2-6).

It is difficult to avoid describing such a passage as Messianic. It obviously refers to someone 'who should come'.

However, the general question is not the important one for our purpose. The question we have to ask is what Jesus Himself meant by His use of the term and what His disciples understood Him to mean. The use of the phrase 'Son of Man' in the Synoptics is undoubtedly Messianic and in John even more so. As Bernard puts it 'It was not a recognised term for Messiah and was not interpreted as such, rather was it enigmatic to those who heard it applied by Jesus to Himself. For Him it connoted all that Messiah meant and more for it did not narrow His mission to men to one race only. It represented Him as the future Judge of men, and as their present Deliverer, whose Kingdom must be established through suffering, and whose gift of life was only to become available through his death'. (John Vol.i.p.cxxxiii).

We have now to examine the use of the term in St. John, leaving on one side for the moment the connection of the term with the death of Jesus.

We first come across the phrase 'Son of Man' in the story of the call of Nathanael. Jesus tells Nathanael that he 'will see heaven open and the angels of God ascending and descending to the Son of Man'. Commentators have seen in this passage a reference to the experience of Jacob at Bethel and although such a reference may be intended, it is dangerous to read too much into it. The idea has grown that Christ is the ladder between heaven and earth and it is upon Him that the angels ascend and descend. But the construction of $\epsilon\pi\iota$ and the Accusative cannot mean 'upon'. It means 'to'. What does it mean to say that the angels of God ascend and descend to the Son of Man. Torrey (The Four Gospels p.318) renders 'in the service of the Son of Man'. This is a possible interpretation of the Greek and would mean at least that the Son of Man is One whom God's angels serve. On the other hand we prefer to interpret $\epsilon\pi\iota$ in its literal sense of 'to' when used with the Accusative. The angels of God come to Him as the focal point of God's manifestation of Himself. In Him God meets Man, heaven invades earth. The 'Son of Man' is God's Word, God's revelation of Himself and His Will in a particular situation. The word to Nathanael means that one day he will come to realise that in Jesus God Himself is confronting man.

In John iii.13.14 vi.62 the Son of Man is described in terms of 'ascending to' and 'descending from' heaven with the clear implication of coming from God. The Son of Man is given authority to execute judgment (v.27) - the prerogative of God. He will give eternal life (vi.27) and God has set His seal upon Him. When he is lifted up they will know that He speaks with the authority of God (viii.28). The only way to Life is to eat His flesh and drink His blood (vi.53) and they will see Him glorified (xii.23 xiii.31).

According to John it is quite clear that Jesus is using the term 'Son of Man' in a Messianic sense - each time the phrase is used it implies someone sent by God with God's authority. Each time it is used it describes God confronting man in a particular situation.

4. SON OF GOD.

The phrase 'Son of God' is an expression which has antecedents in both Greek and Jewish thinking. As Dodd has pointed out (IFG p.250) the idea of being affiliated to a deity, in one sense of another, was extremely widespread in the ancient world. Here as elsewhere the true lineage of John is to be found in Jewish thinking.

The Old Testament does not help us a great deal here. 'Son of God' can be used to refer to so many things. The phrase is used to refer to angels (Job.i.6.xxxviii.7), it is used to describe the Jewish nation (Exod.i.v.22 Hos.xi.1.), and the king (Ps.lxxxix.27 2 Sam.vii.14). In one New Testament reference it describes Adam (Lk.iii.38). There is however a development between the Testaments and by the time the Gospels were written it was a well-known title for the Messiah who was to come. We can see glimpses of this development in 4 Esdras vii.28 'My Son the Messiah shall be revealed', 4 Esdras xiii.3, 'My Son shall reprove the nations' and 1 Enoch 'I and my Son will be unified with them for ever in the paths of uprightness in their lives'.

In the Synoptics the use of the phrase 'Son of God' is fully Messianic. The disciples after the storm at sea (Matt.xiv.33), Peter at Caesarea Philippi (Matt.xvi.16) and the centurion at the Cross (Matt.xxvii.54 Mk.xv.39) recognise that Jesus is God's Messiah. The use of the phrase in the experiences of Jesus undoubtedly has the same meaning. 'Thou art my beloved Son' at the Baptism (Mk.i.11 and parallels) is followed by the challenge of the Tempter to prove His Messiahship 'if thou art the Son of God' (Matt.iv.3 Lk.iv.3.9). The Messiahship of Jesus is confirmed at the Transfiguration (Mk.ix.7 and par) and Jesus accepts the Messianic title 'Son of the Blessed' at His trial (Mk.xiv.61 and par). The final temptation at the Cross (Matt.xxvii.40-43) is again a temptation to doubt His Messiahship.

There are glimpses of something even deeper than Messiahship however. The words of Jesus 'No man knoweth the Son save the Father and no man knoweth the Father save the Son' (Matt.xi.27 Lk.x.22) hint at something more but the greater part of the evidence suggests that 'Son of God' in the synoptics equals 'God's Messiah'. The phrase in common with other Jewish writings is metaphorical.

When we turn to the Fourth Gospel we are in a different world. It is true that some passages suggest a Messianic use. The words of the Baptist 'I have borne witness that this is the Son of God' (i.34) and of Nathanael 'You are the Son of God' (i.49) could be Messianic only and the same could be said of Martha's words in xi.27. On the other hand there are passages which clearly show that the 'Son of God' in Johannine use is much more than Messianic. The daring description 'the only begotten Son which is in the bosom of the Father' leaps beyond Messianic categories.

His enemies see quite clearly that He is claiming more than Messiahship. 'You say that I am blaspheming because I say I am the Son of God' (x.36) 'He ought to die because he made Himself the Son of God' (xix.7) - the claim to be Messiah would not be blasphemy, neither would the claimant be worthy of death. Jesus is not claiming to be recognised only as God's Messiah and His enemies know it.

When we examine the use of the phrase on the lips of Jesus Himself certain things are clear.

i. There is a bond of love between the Father and the Son which makes a unique relationship and the Son acts as the Father acts. He is sent as God's representative on earth.

'The Father loves the Son and has given all things into His hand' (iii.25).

'The Son can do nothing but what He sees the Father doing' (v.19)

'The Father loves the Son and shows Him all that He Himself is doing' (v.20).

'I will do it that the Father may be glorified in the son (xiv.13-14).

'Glorify Thy Son that Thy Son may glorify Thee' (xvii.1).

We may notice in connection with these references the number of times Jesus claims that He has been 'sent' by the Father. (e.g. xiii.20. v.43. iv.34).

ii. As God's representative on earth He brings life and judgment - there is a crisis as God manifests Himself and man must choose either life or judgment.

'God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him, might have eternal life (iii.16) He who does not believe is condemned because he believeth not on the Son of God' (iii.18).

'He who believes on the Son has eternal life (iii.36). The Son 'gives life to whom He will' (v.21). The Father has given judgment to the Son (v.22). Even the dead will hear His voice and live (v.25) and 'everyone who sees the Son and believes has eternal life and will be raised up'. (vi.40).

'Son of God' then in St. John's Gospel means something more than 'Messiah'. C. H. Dodd (IFG 262) says 'The relation of the Father and the Son is an eternal relation. The human career of Jesus is a projection of this eternal relation upon the field of time'. This 'Projection' is our 'manifestation of God' - 'I have manifested Thy Name' i.e. Thy nature. Once again we see that the manifestation brings a crisis. The choice is 'Life' or 'Judgment' as once again man is confronted by God.

Our discussions of this chapter concerning Logos, Messiah, Son of Man, Son of God, can be summed up in two quotations from R. Bultmann. The first is taken from his 'Theology of the New Testament' trans. Gubel. Vol. ii. p. 33.

'It is clear that in the Person of Jesus the transcendent divine reality became audible, visible and tangible in the realm of the earthly world. In all that He is, says and does, He is not to be understood as a figure of this world but His appearing in the world is to be conceived as an ambassage from without, an arrival from elsewhere'.

The second is quoted by W.F. Howard (Fourth Gospel in recent Criticism p. 252) from the same work.

'Man stands - or stood - confronted by the decision for or against God, and he is ever anew confronted with this decision through the revelation of God in Jesus. Out of the cosmological dualism of Gnosis there has emerged in John a dualism of decision'.

CHAPTER VI. THE OFFER OF GOD.1. ETERNAL LIFE.

- a. Background to the Johannine use
 - i. Old Testament.
 - ii. Greek Sources.
 - iii. The Talmud.
- b. Eternal Life in the Johannine Writings.
 - i. A present possession.
 - ii. It is deathless.
 - iii. It depends on Jesus.
 - iv. It is Fellowship with God.
 - v. It consists in obedience.

2. KNOWLEDGE OF GOD.

- a. Jesus knows the Father
- b. Believers know Christ and thereby know God.
- c. Knowledge of God depends upon obedience.

CHAPTER VI. THE OFFER OF GOD.

When God manifests Himself it is always a purposive manifestation. We have seen that according to John the life of Jesus is nothing less than a manifestation of God Himself upon the field of time. The reason for this manifestation is to offer man a new relationship with His God, in other words, to offer the restoration of the Old Covenant relationship. The word 'Covenant' is not used in the Fourth Gospel but the description of the new relationship offered is nothing less than the description of the old relationship restored. Expressed simply, the offer is the offer of Forgiveness. The important words here are 'Eternal Life' and 'Knowledge of God'.

1. ETERNAL LIFE.

a. Background to the Johannine use.

i. Old Testament. The term 'Life' in the Old Testament generally means earthly life and well-being with no idea of immortality. It is only linked with 'eternal' once - in Daniel xii.2. 'the dead shall awake some to everlasting life and some to shame and everlasting contempt'. When one remembers that the Old Testament has little or nothing to say about life beyond the grave it is not surprising that the only use of 'eternal life' occurs in the one book which certainly teaches such a doctrine. For Old Testament usage therefore we can only define our terms. According to Kittel $\alpha\iota\omega\nu$ refers to a period of time of which the beginning and end are out of sight without implying that either is endless. Although the word $\alpha\iota\omega\nu$ is found one hundred and fifty times in the LXX it does not appear to mean more than 'age-lasting'.

ii. Greek Sources. If there is little material on this subject in the Old Testament there is still less in possible pagan sources. The term $\z\omega\eta\ \alpha\iota\omega\nu$ is not found until long after the Johannine period. Plato uses the word $\alpha\iota\omega\nu$ to denote that which has neither beginning nor end and is subject to neither change or decay. It refers to that which is above time but of which time is a moving image (J. Baillie. *The Life Everlasting* p.206). This use is purely metaphysical and is no help to the understanding of John. Philo only uses $\z\omega\eta\ \alpha\iota\omega\nu$ on one occasion 'Is not the flight to true being life eternal?' (De Fuga 78.3) and the Hermetists use it to describe the divine life into which men may enter.

iii. The Talmud. We get much more light when we turn to Jewish sources. In the Talmud $\z\omega\eta$ is used to denote everlasting life beyond the grave and $\alpha\iota\omega\nu$ comes to mean 'everlasting' as opposed to 'temporary'. C. H. Dodd (IFG p.146) suggests that

in Jewish usage we may distinguish three forms of expression which might lie behind the Christian use of the terms. i. Life as contrasted with death. ii. Life of the Age as contrasted with the life of time. iii. Life of the Age to come as contrasted with the life of this age.

'Eternal Life' is a characteristic gift of the Torah. 'Great is the Torah for it gives to them that practise it life in this age and in the age to come' (Pirk.Aboth.vi.7). 'Everyone who makes use of the light of the Torah, him the light of the Torah makes living and everyone who does not make use of the Torah, to him the light of the Torah does not give life' (T.B. Keth. 3a). 'The words of the Torah are likened unto water. Just as water is life to the world, so the words of the Torah are life to the world' (Sifn.E.Kebh.37.c.d.).

It is clear here that we are moving in a Johannine atmosphere. C. H. Dodd (N.T.Studies, 1952) emphasises repeatedly that the thought of the New Testament while it has been subject to Greek influence is rooted in Hebraic tradition and that the Johannine conception of Eternal Life is entirely un-Greek. Whilst reminding ourselves that ~~no~~ part of the Talmud was written down in the days of John we can see in which direction Rabbinic thought must have been moving. John was in the direct line of Hebrew thinking and it is against this background that we turn to examine John's use of the phrase 'Eternal Life'.

b. Eternal Life in the Johannine Writings.

It is well to note first of all that in many respects 'Eternal Life' in John correspondsto the idea of the 'Kingdom of God' in the Synoptics. The phrase 'Kingdom of God' is used only once in John, in the story of Nicodemus. W. F. Howard points out (Christianity a/c St. John p. 112) that it is highly significant that in the two halves of the discourse of Jesus with Nicodemus, the first opens with the saying 'Except a man be born from above he cannot see the Kingdom of God' whilst the second half ends with the words 'He that believeth on the Son hath Eternal Life'. Howard suggest that here the equation is 'Kingdom of God equals Eternal Life'. The characteristics of the Kingdom in the Synoptics are the characteristics of Eternal Life in John.

i. Eternal Life is a present possession.

This is emphasised by the constant use of the present tense in passages such as the following,

- iii.36. He who believesⁱⁿ the Son has eternal life.
- v.24. He who hears my word and believes Him who sent me, has eternal life, he does not come into judgment, but has passed from death unto life.
- vi.47. He who believes in me has eternal life.
- 54. He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life.

This corresponds with the Synoptic theme that in Jesus the Kingdom has already come and may be entered now.

ii. Eternal Life is deathless.

- x.28. I give them eternal life and they shall never perish.
- xi.25. He who believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live.
- xii.25. He who makes his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.

C.H. Dodd points out (IFG 147/8) that the implication of xi.25 is that the believer is already 'living' in a pregnant sense which excludes the possibility of ceasing to live, in other words the resurrection of which Jesus had spoken is something which may take place before bodily death and has for its result the possession of eternal life here and now. The raising of Lazarus is a dramatisation of this.

It is often said that John's 'Eternal Life' is qualitative rather than quantitative. It does not merely mean deathless but it refers to a quality of life which cannot be broken by death.

iii. Eternal Life depends on Jesus.

There is no other way into Eternal Life except through Jesus. There is the positive statement of this,

- vi.40. This is the will of my father, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him should have eternal life.
- xvii.2. Thou hast given him power over all flesh so that he might give eternal life to all whom he will.
- i.Jno.v.11. God gave us eternal life and this life is in His Son.
- cf. also iii.15.16. iv.14. v.39.vi.27.47.54. x.28.xi.25.
- I Jno i.2. v.13.

There is also the converse that 'No man cometh unto the Father but by Me'. He is the gateway through which a man must pass before he finds Eternal Life - there is no other way.

iv. ETERNAL LIFE is Fellowship with God.

The references here are many. They illustrate a most intimate fellowship which even reaches the experience of indwelling.

- vi.56. He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me and I in him.
- xvii.3. This is life eternal, to know Thee the only true God.
- I.Jno.i.3.4. Our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ.
- I.Jno.ii.24.5. You will abide in the Son and in the Father. And this is what he has promised us - eternal life.
- I.Jno.v.20. To know Him who is true and in him who is true. This is eternal life.

v. Eternal Life consists in obedience.

xii.50. His commandment is eternal life. What I say therefore I say as the Father has bidden me.

It will be seen therefore that:-

a. Eternal Life is something which is offered in the coming of Jesus. Man can enter into it now and death has no power over it.

b. Eternal Life consists in a fellowship with God depending on obedience. This is the old Covenant relationship which is restored in Christ. In other words - it is forgiveness, the restoration of the old relationship, which is offered.

We have seen above that John defines eternal life in xvii.3 by quoting the words of the prayer of Jesus 'This is life eternal - to know Thee'. Eternal Life is to be understood as knowledge of God, To this we must now turn.

2. KNOWLEDGE OF GOD.

C. H. Dodd (IFG p.151ff) has investigated the term 'Knowledge of God' as it is used by Philo, the Hermetists and the Gnostics. He finds that to the Hermetists, knowledge of God is 'a discipline of speculation culminating in the mystical vision', to the Gnostics it is 'a quasi-scientific knowledge of the realm of being which transcends all human experience communicated in terms of mythology'. Neither of these conceptions has anything in common with the Johannine use. Philo speaks of $\gamma\upsilon\omega\sigma\iota\varsigma$ which is obtained through the understanding of the divine revelation given in Holy Scripture - it is an 'awareness of pure being and the quality of communion with God through faith and love'. The point at issue, of course, is what John means by the phrase and there is little or no help to be found in Greek sources although we must remember that in the First Epistle John has the Gnostics quite clearly in view.

Two words are used for 'to know' $\gamma\upsilon\omega\sigma\kappa\omega$ and $\sigma\iota\delta\alpha$. Abbott Smith (p.92) distinguishes between them as follows.
 $\gamma\upsilon\omega\sigma\kappa\omega$ means to know by observation and experience whilst
 $\sigma\iota\delta\alpha$ means to know by reflection i.e. a mental process based on intuition and information. An examination of the passages in John where these two words occur shows that sometimes this distinction is clear but there are many passages which suggest that the two words are largely interchangeable. There is nothing here which guides us to the Johannine meaning.

Bultmann in Kittel's 'Worterbuch' draws a distinction between Greek and Hebrew usage. He says that the Greek conceives knowing as analogous to seeing, he externalises the object of knowledge and

contemplates it from a distance. He strives to ascertain its essential qualities so as to master its reality. Known and knower stand over against each other. The Hebrew on the other hand conceives of knowledge as consisting in experience of the object in relation to its subject. Bultmann says that $\gamma\tau$ implies an immediate awareness of something as affecting oneself. It can be used of experiencing sickness (Is.liii.3) or the loss of children (Is.xlvii.8) or divine punishment (Ezek.xxv.14) or inward quietness (Job.xx.20). To the Greek to know God means to contemplate His ultimate reality in its changeless essence. For the Hebrew it is to acknowledge Him in His works and to respond to His claims, that is, by His revelation in history. For the Greek it is pure contemplation, for the Hebrew it is essentially intercourse with God. C. K. Barrett (ppl35/6) makes a similar distinction. He points out that God's knowledge of Israel includes His election and care for His people (Amosiii.2) and for ~~man~~ to know God implies not only perception of His existence but also a relation with Him of humble obedience and trust (e.g. Jer.xxxi.33).

Once again we see John in the direct Old Testament line. Knowledge of God is no mere act of intellectual contemplation. It involves direct experience and fellowship. It is significant that when we turn to John the idea of knowledge is linked with the thought of indwelling. A few examples may be given,

- x.38. Believe the words that you may know and understand that the Father is in Me and I in the Father.
- xiv.17. The spirit of truth..... you know Him for He dwells with you and will be in you.
- xiv.20. In that day you will know that I am in my Father and you in me, and I in you.
- 1. Jno.iii.24. All who keep His commands abide in Him and He in them.
- iv.15. Whoso confesseth that Jesus is the Son of God abides in Him and He in God.

With this meaning of 'Knowledge' according to John in mind we notice the following characteristics.

a. Jesus knows the Father.

This is fundamental to the whole Gospel and the Epistles. 'I know Him for I came from Him and He sent Me' (vii.29). 'I know Him. If I said I do not know Him I should be a liar like you; but I do know Him and I keep His word' (viii.55). 'I know my own.....as the Father knows Me and I know the Father' (x.15). 'The world has not known Thee but I have known Thee' (xvii.25).

A large number of other passages could be quoted but quite apart from any actual quotations of words the whole life and ministry of Jesus is against the background of His own knowledge of God - the Father who sent Him.

b. Believers know Christ and thereby know God.

'If you had known Me ye would have known my Father also, henceforth you know Him and have seen Him' (xiv.7). It is taken for granted that when a man knows Christ he comes into touch with God and knows the Father. John's whole Gospel is the message of the word made flesh - He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father (xiv.9) - the only begotten Son hath declared Him (i.18). The Divine initiative is once again paramount. To know Jesus therefore is to know God. The same theme is constant in the Johannine Epistles. 'You know Him who is from the beginning, you know the Father' (I.Jno.ii.12-13). 'We know that we are of God' (I.Jno.v.19).

c. Knowledge of God depends upon obedience.

Obedience is part of the knowledge of God possessed by Jesus. 'I keep His word'. It is also the condition of knowledge of God in the believer. 'If you continue in my word you shall know the truth' (viii.32). 'If a man wills to do His will he shall know' (vii.17). 'By this we may be sure that we know Him, if we keep His commandments' (I.Jno.ii.3f).

Knowledge of God is therefore, according to John, a relation of fellowship with God, experience of God, based upon obedience to God. It depends on faith or belief and issues in love.

The Offer of God in Jesus of 'Eternal Life' which is 'Knowledge of God' is an offer of a relationship of complete fellowship with God. It is the relationship which was offered in past days but which has been either refused or broken. We can say that Eternal Life and Knowledge of God equals the New Covenant. The word 'Covenant' is not used but the themes we have been discussing recall not merely the terms of the Old Testament Covenant but also the words of Jeremiah xxxi.33-34. 'I will put my law in their inward parts and in their heart I will write it....and they shall all know me from the least of them to the greatest of them for I will forgive their iniquity'. Here knowledge of God is described as the consequence of the New Covenant. It also includes the forgiveness of sins. John's message is the message of the New Covenant. The offer of the New Covenant is the offer of a new relationship which is the offer of forgiveness.

CHAPTER VII. RESPONSE - SIN AND FORGIVENESS.1. REJECTION - SIN.

- a. Its nature.
- b. The power of evil.
- c. The results of sin.
 - i. Separation from God.
 - ii. Judgment.
 - iii. Spiritual atrophy.
 - iv. Death.

2. ACCEPTANCE - BELIEF.

The Results of Belief

- i. Forgiveness.
- ii. A New Birth.
- iii. A child of God.
- iv. Sanctification.
- v. Assurance.

Summary.

CHAPTER VII. RESPONSE - SIN AND FORGIVENESS.

We have seen that John presents the life of Jesus as a Manifestation of God confronting man with an offer - the offer of a new relationship summed up in the terms 'Eternal Life' and 'Knowledge of God'. This offer is the new Covenant, the restoration of the Old Covenant relationship. It is the equivalent of the offer of Forgiveness. Everything depends on the response a man makes to that offer. It is in this context that we have to see John's doctrines of Sin and Forgiveness.

1. REJECTION - SIN.

(a) Its nature.

We are examining John's doctrine of sin from the point of view of his actual use of the term. The wider conception will only come to light when we examine the Gospel in its framework. So far as the use of the term 'sin' is concerned we find *ἁμαρτία* and its cognates 53 time, *ἁμαρτάνω* three times, and *ἁμαρτωλός* once. Their meaning corresponds to the LXX usage. *ἁμαρτία* means to miss the right mark but only because one has deliberately aimed at a wrong one. The missing of the mark as we saw in our earlier discussion of this term is the outcome of an evil will and purpose, an act of conscious rebellion against God. *ἁμαρτάνω* and *ἁμαρτωλός* both imply the disobedience of the will of a righteous God.

Sin is defined at I Jno.iii.4. 'Everyone who commits sin is guilty of lawlessness', that is *ἁμαρτία* equals *ἀνομία*. The mark is missed because one refuses to keep God's law. In I.Jno.v.17 we get the further proposition 'All wrong-doing is sin', that is *ἁμαρτία* equals *ἁμαρτία*. The mark is missed because man refuses the righteousness of God. Sin is therefore interpreted in its Old Testament sense of rebellion against God and the rejection of his known Will. As such, sin is universal (I.Jno.i.8-10).

John, however, goes further than this. Sin consists in the rejection of God's manifestation of Himself in Christ. It can be said that John only-knows one sin, the sin of rejection and this is on almost every page of his writings. With the coming of Jesus man is put into an existential situation - face to face with God. Sin is the rejection of Jesus.

Towards the close of the interview with Nicodemus (iii.18:21) we get a plain statement of the supreme fact. This is the KRISIS - light has come into the world. The man who loves darkness more than light is condemned already because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God, that is, because he has rejected God's manifestation of himself in Jesus.

The sense of *Kp1615* is emphasised again in ix.39. 'For *Kp1615* I came into the world'. In the upper room discourse we find an amplification of the same theme (xv.18-25). If he had not come, if they had not been confronted with the manifestation of God, they would not have had sin. He has come. He has spoken to them and done the work none other did. They have seen and heard - and hated. There is no excuse. When later Jesus promised the Holy Spirit (xvi.8-11) He says that the Spirit will convict the world of sin 'because they do not believe in me'.

After the Resurrection Jesus commissions his disciples. 'If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained' (xx.23). The meaning of this can only be seen when it is linked with the clause. 'As the Father has sent me, even so I send you' (xx.21). He has been sent by the Father. Sin and forgiveness depend upon man's attitude to Him. Sin and forgiveness in the future will depend upon man's response to the message of the Church. In that message the manifestation of God will be re-presented. Whenever it is thus re-presented man will be in an existential situation - a new *Kp1615*. Sin and forgiveness will depend upon man's response.

These examples are illustrative and not exhaustive. The supreme, in fact the only sin to John is the rejection of God's manifestation of himself in Jesus.

(b) The power of evil.

No discussion of sin in the writings of St. John can be adequate without reference to the fact that he is conscious of a power of evil which enslaves man and makes him prone to reject the manifestation of God. We shall have to face this issue more fully when we consider John's doctrine of the Atonement but we must note it here. 'He who commits sin is a slave of sin' (viii.34) is simply the statement of human experience. Man is bound by something which makes him do wrong even when he wants to do right. Paul was conscious of this in Romans vii. John however is not content to describe a vague feeling of being bound. 'You are of your father the devil' (viii.44) is the accusation against those who reject Jesus. In the first Epistle he is even more definite 'He who commits sin is of the devil' (iii.8) and 'The whole world is in the power of the evil one' (v.19). When man is faced with the manifestation of God there is a power pulling him away from God.

John is one with Paul in his conception of the struggle between Good and evil. God and the Devil, or as he often expresses it, between Light and Darkness, God and the world. Man is constantly in a state of *KRISIS* in which he has to choose. Man must be bound. If he will not accept the yoke of obedience to God he must be the slave of sin and in the power of the evil one.

(c) The results of sin.

If man rejects the manifestation of God certain results follow according to John. These can be set out as follows:-

i. Separation from God.

There can be no fellowship with God whilst a man remains in sin and refuses to respond to God. 'We know that God does not listen to sinners' (ix.31). 'If we say that we have fellowship with Him and walk in darkness we lie and do not the truth' (I.Jno.i.6). John can be as emphatic as that. There is no possibility of having fellowship with God and remaining in sin.

ii. Judgment.

R. Bultmann (Theology of the New Testament pp.37.38) says *Kp1615, Kp1616* both have the sense of judgment and sunderance. The judgment takes place in just the fact that upon the encounter with Jesus the sunderance between faith and unfaith, between the sighted and the blind is accomplished...the judgment is no dramatic cosmic event, but takes place in the response of men to the word of Jesus'.

Jesus Himself is quite plain 'He who rejects Me and does not receive my saying has a judge' (xii.48).

iii. Spiritual atrophy.

The one who rejects Jesus comes to the point when he cannot accept because he cannot see 'darkness has blinded his eyes' (I.Jno.ii.11). No one who sins has seen or known Him (I.Jno.iii.6). John is only drawing out to its logical end a fact of human experience. It is a fact of common experience that faculties not used lose their use. When a decision has been taken along a certain course it is always easier to take a second decision in the same direction. It is hard to turn into another way. We are creatures of habit and habit once formed is not easy to break. There is real truth in the statement that we get 'set' in certain ways.

iv. Death.

As Eternal Life is the reward of acceptance so death is the inevitable consequence of rejection. 'You will die in your sins unless you believe' (viii.34). 'He who disobeys the Son shall not see life' (iii.36). The alternatives are absolute in iii.16. It is a case of eternal life or perishing. With God is life - separation from God always means death for there is no life apart from Him.

The doctrine of sin according to St. John is exactly in line with the Old Testament doctrine. In its nature and results there is

complete correspondence. The vital fact in St. John is that sin is now understood in terms of the rejection of Jesus.

2. ACCEPTANCE - BELIEF.

The alternative to rejection or sin is 'to believe'. W.F. Howard (p.154) draws attention to the fact that the word 'Faith' ($\pi\iota\sigma\tau\iota\varsigma$) is never used in the Fourth Gospel or in the 2nd and 3rd Epistles. It is only used once in the First Epistle. On the other hand the verb $\pi\iota\sigma\tau\epsilon\upsilon\epsilon\iota\upsilon$ and its cognates is used nearly a hundred times in the Gospel and 9 times in the First Epistle. When one contrasts this with the rest of the New Testament - $\pi\iota\sigma\tau\iota\varsigma$ used 25 times in the Synoptics, 15 times in Acts and 106 times in St. Paul's writings some explanation is called for. Dr. Howard suggests that the 'tendency to regard $\pi\iota\sigma\tau\iota\varsigma$ as a fixed deposit of truth led John to prefer the verb'. What is involved is not an acceptance of a fixed deposit of truth but the taking up of a personal attitude. Faith is something a man has to do, a response he has to make.

John forces us therefore to concentrate upon the verb. The normal use of $\pi\iota\sigma\tau\epsilon\upsilon\epsilon\iota\upsilon$ in Classical Greek is with the simple Dative and the meaning 'to believe' or 'to believe in'. The Koine use is similar. In the New Testament however we get $\pi\iota\sigma\tau\epsilon\upsilon\epsilon\iota\upsilon$ used not only with the simple Dative with the sense of 'believe' or 'give credence to' but also with the prepositions $\epsilon\upsilon$, $\epsilon\iota\varsigma$ and $\epsilon\pi\iota$. For our purpose the following adaptation of a table of use in Moulton's 'Grammar of New Testament Greek' (Vol. 2, p. 68) is useful.

	Simple Dative	$\epsilon\iota\varsigma$ + Accus.	$\epsilon\pi\iota$ + Dative	$\epsilon\pi\iota$ + Accus.	Totals. =
Matt.	4	1	0	1	6
Mk.	1	0	0	0	1
Lk. Acts	9	3	1	4	17
Jno.	18	37	0	0	55
Paul	6	3	4	2	15
Peter	0	1	1	0	2

It is obvious that the overwhelming use of $\pi\iota\beta\tau\epsilon\upsilon\epsilon\iota\nu$ is found in the Johannine writings. Moulton has the following comments to make regarding meaning. The use of $\pi\iota\beta\tau\epsilon\upsilon\epsilon\iota\nu$ with $\epsilon\iota\varsigma$ and the Accusative stresses the importance of the difference between mere belief and personal trust (page 68).

$\epsilon\pi\iota$ plus the Dative refers more to the initial act of faith whilst $\epsilon\iota\varsigma$ denotes the bringing of the soul into a mystical union with Christ (= $\epsilon\nu\ \chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\omega$). These distinctions must not be pressed too far for late Greek was not always so systematic.

For our purpose however it is significant that John uses a construction which denotes above everything else a personal response and in many cases when he uses the simple Dative the context shows that this personal response is in mind. We should also note that on three occasions John uses the phrase 'to believe on His Name' (i.12.ii.23.iii.18) which Barrett says is equivalent to $\epsilon\iota\varsigma$ plus Accusative.

It is not easy to convey the meaning of John's phrase in English for there is no English verb corresponding to the noun faith. We cannot use 'to faith'. Perhaps the nearest we can get is to 'trust' or better still 'to have faith in'. If I have faith in a person it means that I give something of myself into their keeping'. If I have faith in my doctor I believe what he says. More than that, if he tells me I need an operation I trust myself to him and place my body in his hands. 'To have faith' in someone always involves an act of committal. This is very near the sense in which John uses the verb $\pi\iota\beta\tau\epsilon\upsilon\epsilon\iota\nu$. It involves committal and obedience.

The object of this 'faith or 'belief' in John is always Jesus e.g. 'To all who received Him who believed in His Name, $\epsilon\iota\varsigma\ \tau\acute{o}\ \theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon\sigma\alpha\varsigma\ \alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon$ He gave power to become children of God' (i.12). The Present Participle here implies a continuous committal or life of faith. Again in vi.28ff when the people ask what they must do to be doing the work of God Jesus replies 'Believe in Him whom He has sent'. In the Upper Room the word is 'Believe in God. Believe also in Me'. (xiv.1).

It is often said that in John the supreme sin is unbelief. That is true if the word unbelief is used in its Johannine sense. Unbelief is the rejection of Jesus - a refusal to commit and obey. Belief is the right response to God's manifestation of Himself - the response of committal and obedience. This is the only door to forgiveness.

THE RESULTS OF BELIEF.

i. Forgiveness.

We have already noticed that the word for 'forgiveness' *αφίευσις* is only used three times in John - xx.23. I.Jno.i.9. ii.12. This may be because the word literally means 'to send away' or 'remit' and remission of sin in John is only the beginning of a much wider experience. Forgiveness is much more than the mere remission of sin - it is the entering into a restored relationship in which it is possible not to sin at all. We have claimed above that 'Eternal Life' and 'Knowledge of God' are the Johannine terms to describe the full experience of the forgiven Christian.

When a man believes in Christ in the sense noted above God deals with his past. He deals with it by means of the death of Christ and John's conception of the meaning of that death will be discussed later. The result of God's dealing with sin brings man into the relationship of forgiveness which is 'Eternal Life' (I.Jno.v.11).

ii. A New Birth.

The believer is born into a new world and experiences a new life. It is no natural progressive development but an experience as catastrophic as the birth of a child. This is discussed in the interview with Nicodemus (iii) and is emphasised again in I.Jno.ii.29.

iii. Man becomes a child of God and a member of the family of God.

The theme is stated in the Prologue - He gave power to become children of God (i.12). It is emphasised in the Epistle 'See what love the Father has given us that we should be called the children of God; and such we are' (I.Jno.iii.1). Man does not become a child of God simply by being a creature of God. He is potentially a child. He becomes a child through the new birth which is the experience of those who believe in Christ.

This becoming God's child brings a man into God's family and there is a new fellowship with others - the fellowship of love. 'We know we have passed from death to life because we love the brethren' (iii.14).

iv. The new relationship leads to sanctification.

'If we walk in the light as He is in the light we have fellowship one with another and the blood of Jesus....cleanses us from all sin' (I.Jno.1.7). 'I am writing to you that ye may not sin' (ii.1). 'No one born of God commits sin' (iii.9). If this seems somewhat of a contradiction of other statements in the First Epistle it should be borne in mind that a different tense of the

verb is used and the meaning is that when a man enters the new life he ceases to walk according to self. He may fail often but he continues to respond to Christ, his whole life is bent in that direction. And walking in response to Christ he gradually becomes like him 'We shall be like Him for we shall see Him as He is' (I.Jno.iii.2).

v. The new life brings assurance.

I.Jno.iii.14. We know that we have passed from death to life. There is a new certainty (cf.iii.21).

Summary.

Our discussion of the great concepts of the Johannine writings has revealed how clearly they follow the characteristic Hebrew pattern. Man is confronted by a Manifestation of God to which he must respond. Sin according to John is the rejection of Jesus. Belief in the Johannine sense is the door to forgiveness, a restored relationship, which is the New Covenant described under the terms 'Eternal Life' and 'Knowledge of God'. The means by which God makes forgiveness possible will be discussed later. We have now to turn to the scheme of the Gospel and see how far this confirms the conclusions we have reached from Vocabulary.

PART III. THE JOHANNINE GOSPEL.

Chapter 8. The Arrangement of the Gospel.

Chapter 9. The Great festivals.

- I. Passover.
- II. Tabernacles.
- III. Dedication.

Chapter 10. The Gospel according to John.

- I. Introduction, The Pattern of Man's Salvation
 - A. The Pattern in Eternity and History.
 - B. The Pattern in the Present.
- II. The first Passover. The New Covenant People of God.
- III. The Second Passover. The New Fellowship with God.
- IV. The Feast of Tabernacles. Light and Water.
- V. The Feast of Dedication. The Shepherd Messiah.
- VI. Third Passover. Deliverance.
- VII. Summary.

Note. The Accepted misplacements.

CHAPTER VIII. THE ARRANGEMENT OF THE GOSPEL.

It is not possible to discuss here the various suggestions which have been made for the re-arrangement of the Fourth Gospel. Many misplacements have been thought possible and many theories have been put forward. For our purposes all that can be done is to say that to the present writer some, at any rate, of the suggestions commend themselves. One is assuming that the following amendments are reasonable and seem to be right. (A brief note as to the reason for accepting them is appended at the end of this part).

- iii. 22-30 should come between ii.12 and ii.13.
- vi. should come between iv and v.
- vii. 15-24 should follow v.47.
- x. 19-29 should follow ix.41.
- xv and xvi. should precede xiv.

One also accepts the judgment that viii.1-11 is no part of the original Gospel. Chapter xxi is in all the MSS and can conceivably be by the same author as the rest of the Gospel. It is however clear from the way that chapter xx ends that chapter xxi is not part of the main Gospel.

When these factors are taken into consideration the Gospel is seen to fall clearly into certain divisions. There is an Introductory Section in which the Pattern of Man's Salvation is clearly and emphatically stated in its main Old Testament themes. This is followed by the story of Jesus arranged around the great Festivals of the Jewish Church. We have the story of Three Passovers, the Feast of Tabernacles and the Feast of Dedication. The arrangement is so clear that it must be of some significance.

In the Introductory Section John shows how Jesus is God's Manifestation of Himself, how rejection of Him is Sin and belief in Him the only response which can lead to the forgiven life. In the following sections he shows how Jesus supersedes the Old Covenant and its Sacramental worship. As each Festival comes he takes one facet of its meaning and shows how it is fulfilled in and replaced by Jesus. Alongside this is shown the growth of the new Community with its new Sacramental worship. Throughout the Gospel the writer continues to emphasize the Old Testament Pattern and there is a constant putting forward of Jesus over against the Jewish system as God's supreme manifestation of Himself - a manifestation which always creates a Crisis.

As we shall see, this is so very clear that it is obviously the reason for the writing of the Gospel, a reason summed up in xx.31 'These are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His Name'. When that is realised all questions of chronology become secondary. John is not interested in chronology as such. He is much more concerned with significance. We can see that by a glance at such a disputed incident as the Cleansing of the Temple in ii.13ff. The Synoptics place this act at the beginning of Jesu's last week on earth and make it the final cause of His arrest. John places it at the very beginning of the Ministry. Supporters of the Synoptic view maintain that if Jesus had acted thus at the beginning of the Ministry it would have led to an immediate arrest. It is only intelligible at the end. On the other hand it can be argued that if one takes the Synoptic story and assumes the Cleansing of the Temple to have taken place a week before the death of Jesus it is very strange that the High Priest could not find two witnesses to remember accurately a statement Jesus had made less than a week before. There are queries on either point of view. But the thing that matters is not when it happened but what it signified. As Rabbi Ishmael's School maintained 'There is no before or after in Scripture' (quoted Daube. The New Testament and Rabbinic Judaism p.408). John places this story at the beginning of the Ministry because just there is its significance in place.

We are not by this position despising Chronological study. Much valuable work has been done and much light has been thrown on the Fourth Gospel by such study. George Ogg (Chronology of the Public Ministry of Jesus Chap.III) has shown that attempts to reduce the number of Passovers in John's Gospel to two have not proved successful and his investigations would support our scheme even from a chronological point of view. We do maintain however that the purpose John had in mind was concerned with significance and not with time. Three Gospels were already in existence - two of them at any rate based upon a chronological scheme. John is concerned with significance and meaning.

The following represents an outline of the Gospel under the arrangements we have suggested:-

I. INTRODUCTION. - The Theme Stated and Illustrated.

i.1 to ii.12, iii 22-30.

This commences 'In the beginning' and ends when the first disciples 'believe on him'. It can be sub-divided -

i.1-18. Eternity and History.

i.19-ii.12. iii.22-30. The present situation.

II. FIRST PASSOVER. ii.13-iv.54.

The NEW COVENANT PEOPLE or FAMILY of GOD.

III. SECOND PASSOVER. vi.1-71, v.1:47, vii.15-24.

The NEW FELLOWSHIP with GOD.

IV. FEAST OF TABERNACLES. vii.1-53, viii.12-59, ix.1-41.

Water and Light.

V. FEAST OF DEDICATION. x.19-29, x.1-18. 30-42.

The SHEPHERD MESSIAH.

VI. THIRD PASSOVER. xi-xx.

DELIVERANCE.

This can be sub-divided.

xi.xii. The Final Issue.

xiii.xvii. Jesus with His Own.

xviii-xx. Trial, Death and Resurrection.

We shall briefly consider these Festivals in turn and then turn to an examination of the Gospel in the light of them.

CHAPTER 9. THE GREAT FESTIVALS.

1. PASSOVER.

A. Origin and Essential Features.

The origin of the Passover Festival has been the subject of much discussion and research. Oesterley suggests (SAI p.99f) that it was originally a festival in honour of the moon with the object of ensuring the increase of flocks and herds. Later, with the change to agricultural life a sheaf of new corn was introduced to ensure the increase of crops.

The origins of the Festival however do not immediately concern us here. An examination of the relevant Biblical passages especially Exodus xii.1-14 and 43-49 and Deuteronomy xvi.1-8 reveal what seem to have been the essential features of the Festival. Originally it was a night celebration involving a sacrifice and a meal and the application of blood to the doorposts as a protection against some evil power.

When we come to the post-exilic period there appear to be two essential features

a. The Sacrifice of an animal which must be slain at the Temple and the blood dashed at the base of the altar. Undoubtedly the Passover Lamb was a Sacrifice. As G. Buchanan Gray puts it 'a victim which had to be slain at the Temple, whose blood had to be tossed down at the base of the altar, whose fat and other specified parts had to be burnt at the altar, was certainly a sacrificial victim' (SOT p.352/353).

b. The rest of the animal was eaten as a common meal.

With the destruction of the Temple and therefore the impossibility of sacrifice the main features changed somewhat. The Seder meal at home took the place of the Sacrifice in the Temple, the four questions about the significance of the Festival together with the Bread, Herbs, Wine and Harosheth placed the meal in its historical settings. There was also given an invitation to all who were hungry to come and eat.

We must not forget however that from the beginning the Passover had a connection with the home and the family. 'When the Temple worship ceased, the Passover most naturally fell into its place in the home, to which, in the narrative of the institution and by its whole character, it belonged before Jerusalem became the sole legitimate seat of sacrificial worship' (G. F. Moore Judaism.Vol.ii.p.40) (cf. also N.H. Snaith: The Jewish New Year Festival p.22-5).

B. The Significance of the Passover.

Our main concern for the purpose we have in mind is to find out what this ritual of the Passover signified in the time when John was writing his Gospel. Undoubtedly the fundamental idea is that of Covenant. This is associated with thanksgiving for redemption from oppression. There seem to be three features involved.

i. SIN.

The connection of the Passover with sin is basic. The Passover Lamb was not in any sense a sin-offering but two features of the ritual are very prominent.

a. before the Festival a he-goat has to be sacrificed for a sin-offering (Numbers xxviii.16-25. Ezek. xlv.21,22). The sin must be forgiven before the worshippers can join in a meal of fellowship with God.

b. Leaven, as a symbol of corruption, must be cast out.

This regulation applies also to the meal offering (Lev.ii.11). and nothing which might ferment is allowed in the house at the time of the Passover. The JE Laws make this quite clear e.g. Ex.xxiii.18 xxxiv.25. The idea is obviously that of getting rid of anything that is evil in order to be fit for communion with God.

These two features may be described as subsidiary parts of the Passover ritual but they are nevertheless vital. The only purpose can be that of cleansing out sin in order to be able to partake. The Passover ritual therefore implies that for fellowship with God man must first of all have his sin taken away.

ii. COMMUNION WITH GOD.

The Passover meal is a meal eaten with God, a meal which therefore symbolises fellowship with God. Robertson Smith (RS.p.339) says 'the significant features are the conveyance of blood to the Godhead and the absorption of flesh and blood into the flesh and blood of the worshippers' and this is 'To become united to Deity'. (Oesterley SAI 106).

The Sacrifice of the Passover is therefore a Communion Sacrifice. Isaac Levy (Passover p.34) quotes Rabbi Ben Isaac in his interpretation of the name of the Festival. He says that Israel calls it the Passover as a recognition of God's mercy in affecting her redemption. God called it the Feast of Unleavened Bread as a compliment to Israel's obedience. This common 'recognition' implies that God and Israel belong to each other. This belonging is Covenant and Covenant is symbolised in a shared meal.

iii. THE EXODUS.

The Exodus has a prominent place in the thought of Israel all through her history. There are no fewer than 156 references to it in the Pentateuch, Prophetic Books and Psalms and it is quoted in thirty-six of the Commands of the Mosaic Law and in an additional thirty-one of the enactments with reference to it. Isaac Levy has pointed out that this amounts to 'one ninth of the whole corpus of Jewish Law contained in the 613 positive and negative commands'. (op cit.80). The Exodus is celebrated in the Passover.

According to the story of the Passover the Covenant people of God were literally saved by the blood of a Lamb. The Exodus deliverance summed up in their minds God's love for His chosen people and every participant in the Passover Festival was expected to identify himself with the purpose of the celebration. "In every age a man is bound to regard himself as if he went forth out of Egypt, as it is written, 'And thou shalt tell thy son in that day saying, It is because of what the Lord did for me when I came out of Egypt'" (Exod.13.8. Pesikta 105a). That is one of the reasons for the four questions and the participants are never allowed to forget that they were redeemed for a purpose.

'Him who wrought for us and for our fathers all these miracles. He brought us out from slavery to freedom, from sadness to joy, from mourning to festivity, from darkness to great light, from oppression to deliverance' (M.Pesachim 10.5).

The Rabbis described the Passover Festival as the 'Season of our Freedom'. The idea of Freedom was not construed as meaning release from all bondage but as freedom to serve their Covenant God. Isaac Levy (op cit.p.98) interprets the idea of deliverance and freedom as follows. The Bible words for freedom are normally 'hofshi' and 'deror' which refer to the release of slaves from their masters and imply that the people who are freed are no longer under control. He points out that these words are never used with reference to the Passover. The Rabbis use the word 'heruth'. Levy points out that the consonants of this word are identical with those of the word 'horath' which means 'engraved' and calls to mind the words engraved on the tablets of stones. True freedom was gained at Sinai when Israel accepted the Law of Jahveh. The Rabbis, says Levy, quoted 'He alone is free who submits to the yoke of the commandments'.

This may seem to be a typical example of Rabbinic exegesis but it is a Jewish scholar's interpretation of the Jewish and Hebrew idea of freedom. The Exodus in the minds of the Hebrews, was a release from subjection to earthly masters in order to be the chosen people - chosen to serve God. The Exodus as celebrated in the Passover is a deliverance for a purpose - the purpose of obedience.

C. SUMMARY.

For our purpose this review of the Passover has had to be very brief and sketchy. It has been sufficient however to discover the main emphases of the Festival. It was meant to be a re-enactment of the greatest occasion of Israel's history and the questions asked and answered made very clear what the purpose and meaning of that occasion were. The great themes of the Passover are - Covenant - the Chosen People of God - the fellowship of the Covenant People with the Covenant God in a common meal and the Deliverance in order to serve.

The New Testament writers have no hesitation in using the symbolism of the Passover to illustrate the Deliverance which Christ has obtained for the new Covenant people, in fact the Exodus theme may be said to control the New Testament throughout. It was referred to in the first Christian preaching e.g. Stephen (Acts vii.36-40) and Paul at Pisidian Antioch (Acts xiii). John begins his Gospel with a reference to the Lamb of God which can only be a Passover reference, especially as he brings his Gospel to an end with the death of Christ at the time of the slaying of the Passover Lamb in the Temple. St. Paul, if possible, is even more explicit for 'Christ is our Passover sacrificed for us' (1.Cor.v.7) and the reference to His Resurrection as a 'firstfruits' (1.Cor.xv.20) may well be a reference to the offering of the sheaf of new corn at the Passover Festival. (see also Heb.iii.16.viii.9.xi.26-28).

II. THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES.

The Feast of Tabernacles was the most popular and joyous of the Hebrew Festivals. Sometimes it was simply called 'The Feast' (1.Kings viii.2) and Josephus describes it as 'a most holy and eminent feast' (Ant.viii.iv.1). It is referred to in Levit.xxiii.33-43, Deut.xvi.13-17, Num.xxix.35.

a. Origin and Meaning.

Three aspects of the Feast of Tabernacles are obvious in the ritual concerning it.

i. Historical. The Feast commemorates the wanderings in the wilderness and the dwelling in 'booths' during those wanderings. Those taking part in the festival are reminded that they were once wanderers without home but through the mercy and grace of their Covenant God they are His people dwelling in the land which He has given them.

ii. Agricultural. Celebrated in September/October the Feast of Tabernacles was the festival of the in-gathering and was linked with prayers for rain for the coming year. 'You shall keep the feast of the ingathering at the end of the year, when you gather in from the field the fruit of your labour' (Ex.xxiii.16. of xxxiv.22).

iii. Messianic. Lightfoot (St. John 182) has drawn attention to the fact that this festival was regarded as foreshadowing the Day of the Lord. The harvest of the year was a foretaste of the final harvest of all the nations in the coming days of the Messiah. It is not without significance that the word *ἄλσος* 'booth' is the same root that John uses to describe the Incarnation (*ἐκ κρήνῶν ὕδατος* 1:14). It is used in the stories of the Transfiguration (Mk.9.5 and parallels) and in Rev.7.15 in a clear reference to the *PAROUSIA*. The early Church obviously used the terminology of this Festival in a Messianic sense.

b. The Lesson for the Festival.

The official lesson for the Feast of Tabernacles was taken from Zechariah xiv and this particular chapter gives expression to the significance referred to above. It is a chapter which looks forward to the days of the Messiah. After reminding the people that Jahveh is king over all, that all depends upon Him, it describes the coming days when there shall be an abundant supply of water and when there shall be continuous light. Water and Light are the two things necessary for all life. The exact words are

'There shall be continuous day, not day and not night for at evening time there shall be light,

On that day living waters shall flow out of Jerusalem, half of them to the eastern sea and half of them to the western sea

And the Lord will be king over all the earth'.

Zech.xiv.7-9

The fact that 'King over all the earth' includes all the nations is confirmed by the actual reference to Egypt as one of the nations included (xiv.18).

c. The Ritual.

The main features of the Feast of Tabernacles as we have seen were the commemoration of the acts of the Covenant God - a realisation that all depended upon Him and a looking forward to the day when all nations would be gathered in by Him who alone gave light and continuous water. These features are expressed in the various rituals for the Festival.

i. Sacrifices. Prior to the Festival proper seventy sacrifices were offered. These were on behalf of the seventy nations of which mankind was supposed to be composed. At her most joyous Feast Israel interceded for all mankind. This was part of Jahveh's purpose.

ii. The Plants. Part of the ritual consisted in the waving of the four plants - citron, palm, myrtle and willow - in all directions of the compass. (M. Sukkah.3.9) This was originally done in procession but later in the home. (See Josephus Antig.iii.10.4. xiii.13.5.) The symbolism here was that Jahveh was the dispenser

of all good things and that He dispensed them to all corners of the earth. Every nation was under His care.

iii. The All-Night Vigil of the Torah. We saw in our discussion about the Passover that the deliverance of Israel was that they might obey their God. Here in the Feast of Tabernacles the Torah - God's manifestation of Himself - was placed central. A vigil was kept before it all night. This was God's command which Israel had to obey.

iv. The Booths. The people dwelt in Booths to recall the care of God when they wandered in the wilderness but also as a symbol of the divine Booth under which God would eventually enfold all the peoples of the earth.

v. The Drawing of Water. On each of the seven days of the Festival water was poured upon the altar. On each day in the early morning a priest with his attendants went in procession to the Pool of Siloam where water sprang from the rock on which the Temple stood. Amid the playing of music and the singing of Isaiah xii.3 'With joy shall ye draw water from the wells of salvation' the priest filled a golden pitcher with water. This was carried back to the Temple and poured upon the altar. From here it ran into two pipes which carried it into the Kidron valley. There was a connection with ^{bringing} rain for future crops 'Why does the Law say, Make a libation of water at the feast? The Holy One, blessed be He, says, make a libation of water before me at the Feast in order that the rains of the year may be blessed to you'. R. Akiba (quoted G.F. Moore. Judaism. vol.ii.p.45) There was a looking back to the wilderness days when water came out of the rock but there was also a looking forward to the day when an unfailing supply would issue from the Temple and make glad the city of God. (For a full description of the rite see M.Sukkah. 4.5.9.)

vi. The Illumination of the Temple. The most popular feature of the Festival was the illumination of the Temple. In the court of the women - surrounded for the occasion with great galleries for the spectators - four great candelabra were lit at the approach of darkness. It was said that their light was so brilliant that every courtyard in Jerusalem was illuminated. From the moment of the illumination until cockcrow there was dancing before the Lord and the singing of hymns of praise. (M. Sukkah. 5.2. Tos. Sukkah. 4.4.)

d. Summary.

The Feast of Tabernacles was a Feast of thanksgiving for the blessings of the Covenant 'a festival perpetuated in every Jewish house as well as synagogue and Temple' (Moore op.cit.ii.48). It was a time when Israel realised that she was dependent upon God for all

she had and was. It was a time of looking forward to the day when God's reign should be acknowledged over all the earth. The symbolism of Light and Water summed up all that Israel believed her God to be - the necessity for all life.

III. THE FEAST OF DEDICATION.

The Feast of the Dedication or Hanukkah was celebrated at the time of the winter solstice. Its purpose was to commemorate the purification of the Temple by Judas Maccabaeus in 165 B.C. After the desecration by Antiochus Epiphanes it was cleansed and purified, the altar rebuilt and the utensils replaced. (IMacc.iv. 36-59). Judas inaugurated a festival of eight days of gladness and joy.

The ritual of the Feast of Dedication recalls in many ways that of the Feast of Tabernacles. The Temple and every home was illuminated for this festival so that Jerusalem was literally a city of light. The Regulations regarding the lights were based on a legend, an account of which is given in Shabbat 21b-23b. After the desecration all the oil was found to be unclean. One small jar of oil was found however bearing the seal of the High Priest and containing sufficient oil for one day only. With this they lighted the lamps and by a miracle it lasted 8 days. The next year these eight days were made a festival. (cf. Shabbat 2 lb. Pesikta Rab.2.) Palm branches were carried in procession through the streets and into the Temple. The significance was chiefly that 'the light of our freedom has come back'. The people rejoiced in gratitude for the heroism of their forefathers and for the deliverance which once again their Covenant God had given them.

The Feast of Dedication however looked forward as well as back and that is its chief significance for us. Rejoicing at one deliverance they looked forward to another Messianic deliverance in the future. O.S. Rankin in chapters vii and viii of his 'The Origins of the Festival of Hanukkah' has shown how this feast was through and through Messianic. We can see this most clearly by once again referring to the official lesson for the Festival. The reading for the first Sabbath of Hanukkah was taken from Zechariah chapter ii verse 10 to chapter iv verse 7. The whole of this passage is Messianic. We are given a picture of a Messianic age under a Messianic priest and a Messianic King, with which perhaps we should compare the two Messiahs of the Qumran literature. The opening verse of the reading sets the theme

'Sing and rejoice, O Daughter of Zion; for lo I come and I will dwell in the midst of you, says the Lord' (Zech.ii.10).

Rankin points out that in St. John's Gospel the subject of the Messiahship of Jesus is brought to explicit formulation in the discussion at this festival (op cit p.277)..

The Feast of Dedication therefore like the Feast of Tabernacles looks forward to the day of the new manifestation of God in the life of His people. Based on a historical fact and offering thanksgiving for that fact, it looked forward to a greater deliverance in the future.

IV. Summary.

Our brief glance at the three great Festivals around which St. John builds his gospel has shown us some leading ideas. The Passover is supremely the celebration of the People of God in Covenant Fellowship with their God and conscious of His delivering power. The Feast of Tabernacles looks forward to the time when God shall come as King over all the earth bringing Light and Life to all men. The Feast of Dedication celebrating the past proclaims the Messianic age of the future.

To an examination of the Gospel according to John we now turn in the light of these festivals.

CHAPTER X. THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN.

I. INTRODUCTION: THE PATTERN OF MAN'S SALVATION.

i.1 to ii.12. iii.22-30.

As in some great symphony the composer states his theme in the opening movement so John announces his theme in the opening section of his Gospel. It is the theme which we have found to go through all Hebrew sacred literature, the pattern of man's salvation by his Covenant God. The Introduction begins in the eternal world, it comes to its end on this earth when the first disciples 'believed on Him' and the new Covenant people were formed.

A. The Pattern in Eternity and History. i.1-18.

'In the beginning was the Word'. 'The Word was God'. 'All things were made through Him'. There is no room left for doubt that God and nothing less than God is to be spoken of. This is the God who created all things who is to be the subject of the writing. God is approaching man.

i. The Manifestation of God.

This God was 'in the world'. The Gospel is to be the story of God manifesting Himself to His people in a form which they can recognise. The words and acts of Jesus are the words and acts of God.¹ He became flesh. This is crucial. All is summed up here. No Greek and no Rabbi could have said these words. It is the one verse in the Prologue for which even Strack-Billerbeck can find no parallel. 'He tabernacled amongst us'. The very word *ἐσκήνωσεν* recalls the Shekinah which was full of associations for any Jew. The consonants in the Hebrew and Greek words are the same. It recalled Jahveh dwelling in the midst of His people. It was even used outside the Old Testament as a periphrasis for the divine Name. 'We beheld His glory'. W. F. Howard (IB.478) says that there is an allusion here which cannot be missed. 'When God was about to give the tablets of stone to Moses, who asked, Show me I pray Thee, Thy glory', He replied, 'Thou canst not see my face for man shall not see me and live'. Now the new Torah is being given. The living Word of God is come. Now He can be seen in bodily form. 'He that hath seen me hath seen the Father' is but a counterpart of the claim that the one who was 'in the bosom of the Father' has made Him known. He is full of truth. God is really present in all that Jesus is and does. John is making it quite clear that he is writing about nothing less than God's manifestation of Himself to His people.

ii. The Crisis.

We are given two pictures here to denote the crisis into which man is forced by the coming of the Word.

a. He was in the World. The word 'world' is used in the New Testament with various shades of meaning. The underlying idea of *κόσμος* is order and fundamentally it means the ordered universe. It is so used in Acts xvii.24 (Paul on Mars' Hill speaks of the 'God who made the world'), Romans iv.13 (Abraham receives the promise that he is to inherit the world). From this it easily comes to mean the inhabitants of the world e.g. Matt.xiii.38 (The field is the world of Matt.v.14), John iv.42 (the Saviour of the World). In John however it comes to have a darker meaning - it is linked with the idea of enmity against God. The word *κόσμος* is used over one hundred times in John and nearly always with the idea of apartness from God or hostility to God. In fact the word *κόσμος* can be defined as 'human society organised against God'. The world, according to John, hates Christ (vii.7), cannot receive Him (xiv.17), hates his chosen (xv.19. xvii.14). God and the world stand over against each other. To belong to the world is to be against God. Man faces an inevitable crisis. To choose the world is to reject God. To choose God is to turn one's back upon the world. Man must decide.

b. Light and Darkness. The great themes of 'Light' and 'Darkness' in the writings of St. John raise many problems. There are undoubtedly links with Zoroastrianism and the mysteries. On the other hand too much can be made of these links. One does not need to go any further East than Israel to find the conception of Light and Darkness struggling against each other. The Genesis story of the creation is the story of Light putting darkness to flight, the idea of Light as a symbol of goodness and God against the darkness of evil is common throughout the Old Testament. In the theology of the Qumran community there is a Prince of Darkness who is the source of evil and the cause of evil in the good. The conception is a thoroughly Jewish one quite apart from external influences, although we must admit possible Persian influences on Israel during the exile. Paul is very conscious of the 'powers of darkness'. To the Biblical writers, especially the New Testament writers, the world is the scene of a great struggle between the powers of light and the powers of darkness. To live in darkness is to reject God. 'The Light shines in the darkness and the darkness overcame it not'. However we derive *κατέλαβεν*, either via Moulton and Milligan's suggestion that it comes from 'overtake' or Bernard's 'overcome' the suggestion is undoubtedly the suggestion of struggle. Jesus says that He has come to bring men out of the power of darkness into the light. (xii.46. viii.12).

The powers of evil are organised against God. There is conflict in the spiritual realm, a counterpart of the struggle upon earth. God and the Devil, Light and Darkness are claiming allegiance and once again, man must choose.

iii. Rejection.

'They received Him not'. 'The world knew Him not'. His own people received Him not. If we accept a theological significance in the Neuter *αὐτῷ* *τῷ κόσμῳ* 'his own property', the rejection is even more clearly stated. Whether we take this to be a reference to the history of Israel before the Incarnation when God came to His own people through the prophets, or whether we take it to mean the Incarnation itself, it reveals the 'sin of the world'. This is SIN according to St. John - the rejection of God's manifestation of Himself. There could be no clearer indication of the idea of sin and its prominence in the Fourth Gospel. Right at the very beginning of the Gospel it is clearly defined. This is to be the Gospel of the Rejection - the Gospel about the Sin of the World.

iv. Response.

To 'them that believed on His name', introduces the other side of the story. There were some who responded. They believed on His Name i.e. they committed themselves to Him. To them He gave the authority to become children of God. This does not come to man by natural right or through the natural means of being born of human parents. It comes directly as a result of responding to Christ. The word which John uses for children is *τέκνα*. It is not only a very intimate word of the family. It comes from the verb 'to beget' and its use by John implies a very close community of life between the Christian and his God. He is born into a new world - he is born into a new life into a new family, directly as a result of responding to Christ. This is a theme to be developed as the Gospel proceeds under the conceptions of 'Eternal Life' and 'Knowledge of God'. This is the opposite of sin as response is the opposite of rejection.

The first part of the Prologue is summed up in verse 15. The one who was there at the beginning will be there at the end. He is Alpha and Omega. The *ἔκχλτος* is the *πρῶτος*. The Christ who comes at the end is the Christ who was there at the beginning. Redemption and Creation are linked together as all is centred in Him.

B. The Pattern in the Present. i.19 - ii.11. iii.22-30.

Turning from the background of eternity John is to describe events which really happened upon this earth. He immediately sets his stage. The Jews are introduced at the very beginning. This term is used by John to describe the opponents of Jesus - it is a term he uses over 70 times as compared with the Synoptic use 5 times. The fact that the opponents are introduced so soon gives us the clue. The manifestation is to be against the background of plain war. These people - the Jews - are the people who reject Jesus. The Gospel is to be the story of God's offer and man's rejection.

'Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world'. With these words John designates Jesus as the Christ. We shall have to look at these words again when we come to consider the Atonement. It seems clear that there is a reference here to the Passover Lamb and also a link with the idea of the Suffering Servant. Be that as it may, it is important to note that at the very beginning of the ministry John points to Jesus 'Behold' and then makes it quite clear that the purpose of the manifestation is to do with the taking away of sin.

The call of the disciples follows on the designation of the Christ. As John points to Jesus, Andrew points Peter to Jesus, Philip points Nathanael to Jesus. Always there is this pointing. There is something to see. God is being manifested. The words are significant..Andrew says 'We have found the Messiah'. Philip says 'We have found Him of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets did write'. All history is leading up to Him. Nathanael says both 'Son of God' and 'King of Israel' which implies 'Messiah'.

There is no doubt that God is manifesting Himself to men. And the men respond. This is a repeated story of individuals coming face to face with Jesus. There is the crisis of encounter and they respond. Two of them must stay with Him, Andrew must bring Peter, Philip must call Nathanael, Nathanael must discover for himself.

The climax is found in the story of Nathanael. Nathanael calls Him 'Son of God, King of Israel'. He replies 'Son of Man'. The divine attributes are to be unveiled in a human life. Angels ascend and descend. There are two worlds and He receives homage from both. There is a perfect contact between heaven and earth simply because He is there. In place of the Messiah Nathanael shall see an enthroned Son of Man. Here is the Mediator. If man is to come back to God here and only here is the Way.

All this is summed up in the first 'sign' which appropriately enough occurs in the city of Nathanael and closes the opening section of the Gospel. The word 'sign' does not imply either in its Hebrew or Greek antecedents the idea of miracle. The miraculous element in the signs is always secondary. It is a symbol in the thing seen of something which is unseen. When Jesus performs a sign it is an illustration of an invisible truth about Him who performs it. This first sign takes place at a wedding feast. This is profoundly significant. The Wedding Feast was a commonly accepted figure of the Kingdom of God. The Bridegroom and the Bride is a reference to the most intimate human relationship. It is a Biblical figure for the relationship between God and his people. 'I will betroth you to Me for ever' said Hosea's God (Hos.ii.19) and the whole of his message is based on that. The figure became almost a commonplace of the prophetic message. 'Your Maker is your husband' (Is.liv.5). 'I was their husband' (Jer.xxxi.32). It was taken over by the New Testament writers as the ideal figure for the relationship between Christ and His people (cf.Mk.ii.19, Matt.ix.15, etc.).

The Bride and Bridegroom theme is, of course, supremely emphasised by Paul. The Church is the Bride of Christ. To have fellowship with her Groom she must be pure. The conception of the Bride and Groom involves the forgiveness of sins and reconciliation with God. The figure was developed by Paul but John was most unlikely to have been ignorant of the symbol and its place in the thinking of the Church. His first sign is a picture of the uniting of the first group to the Bridegroom of the Church. If our acceptance of the misplaced fragment of iii 22-30 as following ii.12 there is a very significant reference in verse 29. When the group believe on Him and are united to Him the Baptist withdraws saying 'He that hath the bride is the bridegroom' and refers to himself as the 'friend of the bridegroom'.

In this setting then, Jesus 'manifested His glory'. There was no doubt of the crisis or of the way in which it was to be met. 'Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it'. There is, in this miracle or 'sign', a clear reference to the lustral rites of the Old Testament. The reference to 120 gallons is pointless unless this is intended. Ceremonial cleansing was to make men fit to take part in the service of God. There was a washing of the priests before their consecration. A laver stood before the Tabernacle in which priests had to wash their hands and feet before offering sacrifices (Exod.xxx.18-21) and the sacrificial flesh had to be washed before it was burned upon the altar (Lev.i.9). The whole point of these lustral rites was to cleanse men so that they could get in touch with God. The waterpots are filled to the brim and then water is drawn. The new manifestation fulfils all that the old could fill and more besides. The water becomes wine and the reference to blood is equally obvious. The 'blood of Christ' now makes it possible to have fellowship with God. This the Christian has in the Eucharist but again it is clear that true fellowship with God can only come to those who have been cleansed from their sins. He takes the place of the lustral rites. The purification is made on the Cross. It continues to be available in the Eucharist.

The Introduction begins with a reference to the Water of the Baptist and it ends with a reference to the Wine of the Eucharist. The Pattern of Man's Salvation is thus linked with the Sacrament of entry into the new Family and the Sacrament of continuation in it.

The climax of this section comes with the simple words 'His disciples believed on Him'. It is, in effect, the climax of the whole Introduction. We began in the eternities with the Word of Creation. This Word became flesh. He is pointed out as the One who takes away the Sin of the world. The Introduction ends with the disciples responding to Him and forming the first group of the new Covenant People who become the Bride of Christ. The new family is formed and linked together with water and blood.

This first section which we have called 'Introduction' is concerned, as we have seen, with God manifesting Himself to men. It is full of men rejecting or responding to that manifestation,

whether it be on a national scale as 'They that were His own' and 'the Jews', or whether it be individuals such as Peter and Andrew and Nathanael, men either reject or believe. Those who reject are against God. This is the Sin of the World - the rejection of God. Those who believe are offered and given a relationship with God which can only be described in the terms of the most intimate relationship possible between two human beings.

The Introduction to the Gospel bears out what we have already seen from Vocabulary - namely that sin is the rejection of God's manifestation of Himself. Forgiveness is the experience of a restored relationship, and that far from being a subsidiary theme of the Gospel, the Gospel is about little else. But there is more than this. Men are face to face with Jesus in an existential situation. This is life's supreme crisis for individuals and the world. John makes it quite clear that when man is confronted by God in Christ he must do something - he must reject or respond. Nowhere else in the New Testament is this idea of a critical existential situation stated so clearly and so definitely. This is to be a Gospel of CRISIS.

II. The FIRST PASSOVER. THE NEW COVENANT PEOPLE OR FAMILY OF GOD. ii.13-iv.54.

Immediately after the Prologue we find ourselves in the atmosphere of the Jewish Passover. We have already seen that one of the central themes of the Passover Festival was the conception of God's Covenant People. In this section of the Gospel John brings us face to face with the theme of the new Covenant People of God.

Significantly enough the section begins with what is known as the Cleansing of the Temple. This is the centre of Jewish religion - the place where God meets man and where man holds fellowship with God. The rejection of the Messiah means the end of the old order and the beginning of the new. We are given a picture of the destruction of the old and its replacement by something new. The old Covenant is finished. The Covenant people as such exist no longer. Between the old and the new there stands the life, death and resurrection of Jesus and it is upon Him that the new Covenant People depends. The Temple worship is replaced. The 'Sacraments' of the old order are no longer the Mediators of God's forgiveness. A new people is formed centred on Jesus and a new sacramental life is begun.

The Pattern we have had in mind is repeated very clearly in this section. There is no doubt that we are in the presence of a Manifestation of God. To Nicodemus, the representative of the old People of God, we see the manifestation from above, Christ is the 'man who comes down'. His coming brings a crisis which is comparable to the moment of physical birth. In the story of the Woman of Samaria we have the phrases 'He that sent me' 'I am He' 'The Saviour of the World' - in each case again the Manifestation leading to a crisis.

The Manifestation leads to an offer. The offer is expressed in such terms as 'Eternal Life' or 'Living Water'. It is in this context that we can see most clearly John's emphasis on sin and its forgiveness. Everything depends upon the response of man to the manifestation of God in Jesus. God loves the world and offers eternal life but the offer only becomes effective in those who believe in Him. For those who refuse to believe it means judgment. It is very clear what sin is. It is the rejection of Jesus once again. 'He that believeth not is condemned already - because he hath not believed'. 'This is the judgment, that light is come into the world and men loved darkness rather than light'.

The alternative to rejection is response. Once again it is the response of belief. Eternal Life depends upon believing in Him. This is the conception we considered when we were discussing the Johannine vocabulary. We find in these chapters however the

references to being 'born of water', and to 'living water'. Perhaps it is not necessary to go into a long discussion as to whether these references to water refer to Baptism or not. The present writer believes that there is no doubt that some reference to Baptism is intended both in the story of Nicodemus and that of the Woman of Samaria. If this can be accepted then two things follow,

- a. Baptism is the way of entry into the new people of God.
- b. It involves the forgiveness of sins.

The way of entry into the Christian Church has always been through the gateway of Baptism. There is no doubt that this was so in the time when John was writing. There is also no doubt that the early Christians thought of themselves as being the new Covenant people of God. They were in fellowship with each other because they were in fellowship with God and were fulfilling His purposes. In order to have fellowship with God a man must have his sins forgiven. The very fact that a man entered the Church through the gateway of Baptism implied, or perhaps one should say involved, the forgiveness of his sins.

The symbolism of Christian Baptism confirms this. The picture that St. Paul gives us of the believer dying to sin and rising to righteousness as he comes out of the Baptismal waters, is very clear. Baptism involves the forgiveness of sins. The proclamation of Baptism and the offer of it is the offer of the forgiveness of sins and the new relationship with God.

Nicodemus is told that the old order has passed away. It means for all - Jew or Gentile - beginning again. We note in passing that this picture is quite new. Paul has described the new life in terms familiar in a system of law (justification) and of slavery (ransom). He has also drawn very near to the idea of the family with 'adoption'. But here we have not 'adoption' but 'birth'. It is not the idea that some are brought into the family from outside and thereby made one of a family when they were not so before. This is the idea of beginning again at the very beginning for everybody. One can no longer assume as one celebrates the Passover that descent makes a member of the family. One has to be born into it. The word 'ἀνωθεν' can mean either 'anew' or 'from above'. Perhaps both meanings are involved. Man must be born into a new family but the birth depends on a relationship to the One who has 'descended' and in that sense it has to be from above.

The new beginning is through the simple way of Baptism into the new people of God. The old pattern is here, the pattern of man faced with a crisis and an offer. It is the statement of the meaning of sin and the offer of forgiveness. 'He that believeth on the Son hath eternal life and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life but the wrath of God abideth on him'. We note also the

link with the idea of death in the reference to 'glorification' and 'lifting up'. We shall consider this later but here again we have a reference to the two Sacraments of the new family.

After Nicodemus, the representative of the Jews, we find the Woman of Samaria. John is following the line of the first Christian mission which in response to its Lord's command followed the route 'Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and the uttermost parts of the earth'. In this new context we get the same picture as in the story of Nicodemus. On the one hand, Jacob's Well representing the old Covenant people. At that spot He offers living water, entry into the new Covenant people of God. It is a once and for all offer - he who drinks of this water shall never thirst again. It is the offer of forgiveness and the time is now when the woman is face to face with Jesus.

If we compare this passage with the other reference to 'living water' in vii.37-39 we note that in the latter instance 'living water' is connected with the Spirit and the Spirit is dependent upon Jesus being 'glorified'. It is not too far-fetched to think that in using these terms - as so often - John has the two Sacraments of the new family in mind. As he works out his theme against the background of the Sacraments of the Old Order he remembers the Sacraments of the New Order.

In iv.31-38 we get the other side of the picture. As the woman goes away to her people there is the discussion regarding harvest. Harvest is a well-known Old Testament figure for judgment and John is clearly stating that judgment is already here. The disciples are being sent out - not to sow seeds which will slowly grow to harvest. They are being sent out to reap. They are being sent out to present Jesus as the manifestation of God. As they present Him in their preaching man will be faced with the issue of rejection or response. As with Nicodemus so it is here. The message of John is not of a gradual growth into the Kingdom. It is the message of crisis. Christ is presented. Everything depends upon how a man reacts to Him.

The word has come to a representative of the Jewish people and to a Woman of Samaria. The section ends with the witness to a Gentile. The Nobleman whose son is healed is right outside the Jewish faith. The story is however a story of a Gentile coming to believe. He begins by believing the word of Jesus but ends by believing without any qualification at all. This is the simple way into the Kingdom which brings in any man, Jew, Samaritan or Gentile. Belief means response to the manifestation of God in Jesus.

We have already seen that the Passover was supremely the Festival (or should we say 'Sacrament'?) of the Covenant People of God. It was essentially a festival of the family, celebrated

by God's family in their individual family groups at home. Against this background John has shown us the birth of a new family based upon response to Christ. The old order has passed away. A new one has been established. The old Temple is no longer relevant. A new one has been built. When man comes face to face with Jesus he is confronted with the decision of the New Covenant. 'Reject' or 'Believe'. 'In' or 'Out'. That is the Crisis. To reject Christ is to put oneself outside. To accept Christ is to belong. When man responds to Christ he receives the forgiveness of his sins and is born into the new family. He enters the family by Baptism. The forgiven life is a life of fellowship with God and His people which is equivalent to a re-birth and is summed up in the term 'Eternal Life'. The old Sacramental worship has become irrelevant too. We are given hints - only hints as yet - of the maintaining of the new fellowship by His death. Above all the old Pattern is seen working out and working out in each case in an atmosphere of crisis.

III. SECOND PASSOVER. THE COMMUNION SACRIFICE - THE NEW FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD.

vi. 1-71, v. 1-47, vii. 15-24.

We saw that one of the great themes of the Passover Festival was the idea of a Communion Sacrifice, that is, the Covenant People sharing a Common Meal with their Covenant God. This is the theme of the Second Passover of St. John's Gospel.

The section begins with the story of the feeding of the five thousand in which there is clearly a reference to the Christian Eucharist. There is no account of the institution of the Eucharist in St. John. It was not necessary, three accounts were already in existence. Here again he is concerned with significance and he chooses to work out that significance against the background not of a quiet Upper Room but in the crowded ways of man. It is described as a 'sign' - that is, a symbol to illustrate something about the person who performs it. The meaning of the Passover Meal is that of Communion with God, which satisfies every need. John tells this story to reveal the power of the Son of Man to meet that need. That which Judaism sought to find in the Passover is found in Christ and nowhere else.

The passage is built around our now familiar pattern. There is no doubt about the manifestation, He 'came down from heaven'. In response to their query 'What shall we do to work the works of God?' - and Judaism stood for 'working the works of God', that was the meaning of its Law and its Festivals - He replies with the word 'Believe'. This is the one thing necessary. The result of belief is eternal life, fellowship with God, the forgiven life. For that, He is essential - as essential as bread.

When a further question comes 'How shall we eat?', in effect, 'How shall we believe?', the answer is - in the Sacrament. The Sacramental reference is unmistakable. Bread and fish are the material of the occasion, common food enough but the same common food He ate with them at the meals He shared during the forty Resurrection days. The words of the blessing in vi.11 include the Eucharistic terms (*ἐὶς ἅπλοσ τε* replacing the Synoptic *ἐὶς ἕνα*). The reference to the Manna implies that the Messianic feast is here. If that were not sufficient verse 35 includes both eating and drinking. The reference to 'he who believes on Me shall never thirst' is quite out of place if the Sacrament is not in mind.

The offer is the offer of partaking in a common meal with God with all the intimacy which that involves. The very Presence of God is mediated through the Sacramental meal. As the people of the Old Covenant believed that they were sharing the family Passover meal with God the new family shares the meal and receives the life of God in the Sacrament of the New Covenant. The answer to their question is in the Sacrament as that Sacrament is a symbol of the appropriation of

the Christ. It means a sharing of His life, what Paul would call 'Christ in me' or 'In Christ'. This indwelling, this appropriation, brings eternal life 'He shall live by me'. Here is the perfect union with God. Here is the forgiven life in all its fulness.

The result of this challenge is a sifting of those who listen. 'Many of His disciples went back and walked no more with Him'. This is the rejection once again, the rejection of God's offer of eternal life. Simon Peter speaks for the others 'Thou hast the words of eternal life'. This has often been described as John's equivalent of Peter's confession at Caesarea Philippi. It is the response of belief, belief in the sense of committal. They realise the alternatives and respond. 'To whom else shall we go?'

It is clear from this passage that John is still construing sin as the rejection of God's manifestation of Himself. It is also clear that it is through Christ and the assimilation of His life and teaching that man enters into the forgiven life - a life of complete fellowship and union with God. So much is probably true of the Biblical revelation as a whole. What is uniquely Johannine is the setting of all this in the Old Testament Pattern and the emphasis on a present crisis to be faced. One begins to see here not only that face to face with Christ is man in an existential situation in which he has to make a decision. There is also the beginning of the suggestion that to be in the presence of the Sacrament puts a man into a similar situation. 'Unless you eat and drink'. When a man faces that issue is it again a moment of crisis when all his destiny depends on rejection or response? Is that a way in which Christ presents Himself in the time when John is writing - and now? Is this the way in which in every age man appropriates the life of God and keeps in the family of God?

The feeding of the five thousand is followed by the incident of the man at the pool. Here again is controversy but this time it commences with the subject of the Sabbath. We notice that once more the controversy consists of a discussion about something that represents the Old Covenant, the Jewish Sabbath. Immediately we are confronted with the insistence upon the presence of a manifestation of God. The word 'sent' is a favourite word of John - forty-two times in all, an average of twice a chapter. He claims authority because He has been 'sent' by the Father. He tells them that however much they marvel at the healing of the man at the pool they will marvel at still greater works. These 'greater works' include the giving of life and its alternative in judgment. Everything depends upon their attitude to Him and to the message He brings. The attitude they take to the Son is the attitude they take to the Father (verses 23-4). That attitude involves a "krisis" and a separation. The separation is going on by their attitude to Him Whom to see and hear is judgment. He that believes has eternal life, will not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life.

And once again over against the Sabbath as representing a Sacrament of the Old Covenant is set the entry to the new Covenant. Cullman (Early Christian Worship pp.85-9) suggests that the Pool has a reference to Baptism and quotes Tertullian 'that which formerly saved one single man in the year, now saves whole peoples daily and destroys death in that it washes away sin. For in forgiving sin, Baptism also releases from affliction' (De Baptismo 5). One need not go so far as Cullman seems to suggest when he says that 'Christs miracles of healing are continued in Baptism' (op cit.87). In this case however the miracle is linked with the forgiveness of sins (v.14) and the healing is done by the Pool. If Cullman is right in seeing here another connection with Baptism the connection between Baptism and the forgiveness of sins is made once again. Once again also John has in mind both Sacraments of the new Community.

On the other hand there is rejection, the final sin. 'Ye will not come to me that ye might have life' which inevitably means 'there is no life for you anywhere else'. 'I am come in my Father's Name and ye receive Me not'. The alternatives are clear - rejection or response, sin or belief, leading to life or death.

All this is set in the context of the Passover. The Passover as we have seen, in this aspect of it, stands for Fellowship with God. This Communion is only found in response to Christ, a response which brings His forgiveness and new life through Baptism and the Eucharist. Rejection of Him is Sin. Communion with God, Eternal Life, which He offers is the life of a restored relationship. Nowhere have the issues of sin and forgiveness been more clearly stated and nowhere has the crisis been so emphasised.

IV. THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES.vii.1-14, 25-53, viii.12-59, ix.1-41.

We have already seen that the Lesson for the Feast of Tabernacles centres around Light and Water and that these were symbolised in the ritual of the Festival. There has been much discussion as to the origin of these metaphors, discussion into which we cannot enter. God as light formed the basis of most of the Gnostic systems. It is a familiar figure in the Hermetica e.g. 'That light, he said, I, even Mind, the first God' (C.H.1.6 -the whole passage should be studied) but whatever the origin it must be borne in mind that the ideas of Light and Darkness on the one hand and of Water on the other are ideas that go through the Jewish Scriptures and were used by Christians as we shall see below. Light is used as a symbol of God and goodness. Its opposite is used as a symbol of evil. Water is used to denote the blessings that come from God and as a symbol of God's Holy Spirit.

Light.

Light was the first thing shaped by God out of Chaos according to the Genesis story. It is used as a symbol for God throughout the Old Testament. The Psalmist tells us that God 'covers Himself with Light as a garment' (civ.2) and only 'in His light do we see light (xxxvi.9). The way of the righteous is described as 'the light of dawn' (Prov.iv.18). Isaiah speaks of God as 'the Light of Israel' (x.17) and gives the promise that 'the Lord will be your everlasting Light' (lx.19). The contrast between Light and Darkness is seen in Isaiah's word in lx. i-5. Darkness shall cover the earth and gross darkness the people but the 'Lord will arise' and bring light - 'nations shall come to thy light and kings to the brightness of thy rising'. It is natural that having the conception of God as Light men should regard darkness as the opposite. Prov.ii.13 speaks of those who 'forsake the paths of uprightness to walk in the way of darkness' and Isaiah calls woe upon 'those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness' (v.20).

These conceptions are carried over into the New Testament. On the one hand Christians are described as 'sharers of the inheritance of the saints in light' (Col.i.12.13) and are told 'once you were darkness but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light' (Eph.v.8) and 'he called you out of darkness into his marvellous light' (I.Pet.ii.9). On the other hand the New Testament uses darkness as a symbol for sin. 'If thine eye be evil thy whole body is full of darkness' (Matt.vi.23). 'Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness (Eph.v.8). Compare also Lk.i.79. xxii.53. Eph.vi.12.

It is obvious that according to the Scriptures God is thought of under the term 'Light' and those who 'walk in the light' are those who have fellowship with God and live the forgiven life.

When we turn to the teaching of the Rabbis we find the same symbols used. God is light 'The Holy One, blessed be He, enwrapped Himself in light like a garment and the brilliance of His splendour shone forth from one end of the universe to the other' (Gen.R.III.4). The Torah is also described under the same metaphor 'the words of the Torah give light to the man who occupies himself with them....They who occupy themselves with Torah have light everywhere...as it is said 'Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path' (Exod.R.xxxvi.3). In the same passage the contrast is drawn with the person who does not follow the Torah and therefore 'is standing in darkness'.

The literature of Qumrah shows the same symbolism. 'In the hand of the Prince of Light is dominion over all the sons of righteousness, who walk in the ways of light' (Man.Disc. iii.20-24). Once again the contrast is drawn in the same passage with Darkness. This will be referred to again in a later section.

Whatever the origin of the Light symbolism may be it is nevertheless true that John is using a term which was common coinage amongst the Jewish teachers over a very long period. Light is a symbol of God and of God's manifestation of Himself either in Torah or other guidance. Those who 'walk in the light' are living 'in His light' and therefore living the forgiven life.

Water.

Here again we are using a term which is common throughout Jewish literature. The Old Testament constantly uses water as a symbol of life from God, a natural thing amongst a people to whom water meant everything. "As the hart panteth after the water brook, so panteth my soul after Thee O God" (Ps.xiii.1) and 'My soul thirsteth for thee... as in a dry and weary land where no water is' (Ps.lxiii.1) are but two expressions of the spiritual longing of God's people. The gift of water is symbolical of the giving of spiritual blessings, not least the gift of the Holy Spirit. 'I will pour water on the thirsty land and streams on the dry ground. I will pour my Spirit upon your descendants' (Is.xliv.3) 'Waters shall break forth in the wilderness and streams in the desert' (Is.xxxv.6) 'I will make them walk by pools of water' (Jer.xxxi.9). It is significant that many passages which can be called Messianic in the sense that they look forward to a future when God will save His people describe that future in terms which include the giving of water to a thirsty land. Ezekiel's great vision (xlvi.1.-11) is a case in point and the whole is summed up in Zech.xiv.8 which is part of the lesson for the feast

of Tabernacles. Other passages which could be quoted include Is. xli.18. xliii.20. xliv.3. xlix.10. lv.1. lviii.11.

It can also be said that the same symbolism was used by the Rabbis in speaking of the Torah. 'The words of the Torah are likened to water, wine, oil, honey and milk. To water - 'Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters'. As water extends from one end of the world to the other, so the Torah extends from one end of the world to the other. As water is life to the world, so is Torah life to the world. As water descends from heaven, so the Torah descends from heaven. As water refreshes the soul, so the Torah refreshes the soul. As water cleanses man from defilement, so the Torah purifies the unclean' (Deut.R.viii.6). The whole passage should be referred to.

Once again John is in the true line with Hebrew thinking in his use of the term water.

In this section then we are dealing with concepts which to the Jew were quite clear in meaning. God was Light. The opposite of God was Darkness. Water was a symbol of what God would do for His people when He visited them. To John these terms which were expressed in the ritual of the Festival can be referred to Christ as the Manifestation of God.

Jesus, after a certain amount of delay, goes up to the Festival. Immediately there is the claim to be God's Manifestation of Himself with the offer He came to bring. They declare that they know his origin but He replies that although they may know His earthly parentage they do not know His ultimate origin. Again there is the reference to 'Him that sent me' (vii.28) and the clear statement 'I am from Him and He sent me' (29). They do not know God but He does. The issue which all men must face is put before them - and some believe. He reminds them that the opportunity will pass. They are in a state of crisis but it will not last for ever - 'Ye shall seek me and shall not find me'.

There is now the claim to be 'Living Water' - the picture Zechariah uses to describe the Messianic Age. It is not in the future - it is present now in Him and men must decide whether they will belong to it. There are two possible translations according to punctuation on which depends the answer to the question as to whether the water flows from Christ or from the Christian. If with W.H. we place a full stop after *πνέτω* and a comma after *ἐς ἐμεῖ* the phrase would mean that living water flows out of the believer. If, on the other hand, we agree with Bultmann and place a comma after *πρὸς με* and a full stop after *ἐς ἐμεῖ* it would mean that the living water flows from Christ. The doubt does not alter the significance for us. The source of the Messianic blessing is in Him - water, life-giving and life-bringing is His to bestow.

'If any man thirst let him come to me and drink'. It is a clear offer. They will not see it but instead of facing the issue take part in a discussion. Some are impressed, amongst them Nicodemus.

The offer is stated again. He is now the Light of the World. To follow him is to cease to walk in darkness but to have the Light of life. Against the background of this term there is no doubt about what He means. This is the offer of God. The fact that they do not respond is a sign that they do not know God. But again - the opportunity will pass and when He has gone they will realise what they have missed and seek Him - but in vain. Their rejection means that they will 'die in their sins' because they have refused the only one who can save from sin. By their attitude to Him they show that they belong to earth and not to heaven. He is of heaven and there can be no fellowship with God if they reject Him. 'If ye believe not that I am He, ye shall die in your sins'. But some respond and 'believe on Him'.

To those who believe He says that to be His disciples means that they must continue in His word. There is a moral demand and this moral demand will bring knowledge of the truth and experience of freedom. Some object that it is foolish to talk of freedom - they have never been slaves. He tells them He is speaking of slavery to sin and draws the contrast between a slave and a son. If they were the sons of God they would respond to Him. The issue is clearly stated once again. It is a choice between God and the Devil and it is made by accepting or rejecting Christ. The discussion comes to a climax when He claims that in responding to Him a man overcomes death. To their query 'Art thou greater than Abraham?' He replies with the ultimate word 'I AM'. He is the timeless God who always IS. It is now put as clearly as that. They fail to respond and He goes away.

As often John illustrates the truth with a miracle. The One who has claimed to be Light gives light to the blind. The miracle is the basis for another statement of the claim 'As long as I am in the world I am the Light of the world' - is this another reference to the Zechariah prophecy? To the one who believes in Him it is always day. Again there is discussion and again there is division. Always He separates. This is the crisis when God's manifestation comes into the world. On the one hand is belief - 'Dost thou believe on the Son of God?' He asks the man. 'Lord, I believe' is the reply - He recognises and responds. On the other hand is rejection. Jesus once again states the issue 'For judgment came I into this world, that they which see not might see and that they which see might be made blind'.

We have here once again quite clearly the pattern. We have the defining of sin as rejection of God's Manifestation of Himself. The alternative to rejection is response - to respond to Him is to have the Light of life - to quench one's thirst with living water.

The alternative is between living the forgiven life of fellowship with God or dying in sin. Everything depends upon response to Him. Rejection is sin. Response is to be forgiven. Again the simple fact is common to the Biblical revelation but the setting of the facts continually in the pattern and the emphasis on present crisis is typically Johannine. Once again he hints at the Sacramental life of the new family 'Let him drink' suggests the Eucharist. Another healing at a pool, this time with the name Siloam, 'sent', suggests Baptism. Over against the Light and Water of the Feast of Tabernacles are set Baptism as the way to Light and the Eucharist as the way to satisfaction of man's deepest need.

V. THE FEAST OF DEDICATION. THE SHEPHERD MESSIAH.
x. 19-29, 1-18, 30-42.

The Feast of Dedication was a celebration of the great deliverance wrought by Judas Maccabaeus. We have seen however that it was no mere celebration of the past. It looked forward to another and greater deliverance in the future. In other words, it was a Messianic feast.

At the Feast of Dedication when men's minds would be pondering the coming of the Messiah Jesus walked in the Temple. Immediately He is approached with the question 'Tell us plainly if thou art the Christ'. He answers that He already has told them but they do not believe and again we have the words 'believe' and 'eternal life'. To make things even more clear Jesus puts forward the message of the Shepherd and his Sheep.

THE SHEPHERD.

The Old Testament has frequently in mind the pastoral background of many of its people. The figure of a shepherd in his relationships with his sheep was a familiar one and a ready-to-hand illustration. God is frequently referred to as the Shepherd of His people. 'The Lord is my shepherd' (Ps.xxiii.1) shows how individual devotion seized upon this figure. 'Thou leadest Thy people like a flock by the hand of Moses and of Aaron' (Ps.lxxvii.20) has a wider reference to the community. 'He is our God and we are the people of His pasture and the sheep of His hand' (Ps.xcv.7) expresses the thought of Israel regarding her relationship to God. Cf.also Ps. lxxix.13, lxxx.1. c.3.

The thought of God as Shepherd of His people had however a future as well as a present reference. Deutero-Isaiah looked to One who would 'feed His flock like a Shepherd' (xl.11) and when Ezekiel speaks of the Messianic King it was in these terms e.g. Ezek.xxxiv.23. 'I will set up over them one shepherd, my servant David, and he shall feed them, he shall feed them and be their shepherd.

xxxvii.24. My servant David shall be king over them and they shall all have one shepherd.

There is no doubt whatever that in Jewish thought the idea of the Shepherd was Messianic and he was quoted as a Messianic figure. It is significant that at the Messianic Festival Jesus chooses a Messianic figure to illustrate His Mission. This thought is not peculiar to John. One should compare Mk.vi.34. xiv.27. 1Pet.ii.25. Heb.xiii.20.

In all the Biblical references the atmosphere of the pastoral scene is the atmosphere of danger. It is not otherwise here. The dangers are emphasised - there are robbers and there

are wolves. In the experience of danger - not merely physical danger but the danger of losing God and missing fellowship with God, He is the only way. 'I am the door'. False Messiahs may promise much and make their appeal but it is only in Him that man can find abundant life. He is the Good Shepherd who is prepared to give life that they might have life.

Three things stated out in this passage.

i. He offers to establish fellowship with God. This is abundant life. 'I know them and they know Me' -- 'as the Father and I know each other'. Those who respond to Him are offered a fellowship with Him as intimate as that which exists between the Father and the Son. This is the Messianic purpose according to Jesus.

ii. He will bring into this fellowship those who do not belong to the Jewish race. The old Covenant relationship is at an end, at any rate in this sense, that God will call in Christ those who do not belong to this fold, if they respond to the manifestation.

iii. To accomplish these two promises He will lay down His life.

Everything is summed up in the final claim - I and the Father are one. This is manifestation indeed. The offer is once again, eternal abundant life. The issue is there to be faced. Once again too we are shown the two kinds of response. On the one hand there is the cry of 'Blasphemy' and they seek to lay hold on Him. On the other hand 'many believed on Him'.

We have claimed that in John's use of the terms 'Eternal Life' and 'Knowledge of God' he is using terms which mean forgiveness. This is so because the terms in question refer to an ideal relationship of fellowship with God. Forgiveness, as we have seen, is the restoration of that relationship when it has been lost. In this section of the Gospel sin is shown to be the rejection of Christ as He makes the offer of forgiveness. Sin and Forgiveness are shown as dependent upon an attitude to Him. The distinctive Johannine emphasis is here again. Because sin and forgiveness are terms with meaning only in a context of relationship they are constantly set in that pattern. Jesus as Messiah is shown in His place at the centre of the pattern. His coming once again creates a crisis. There is no way back to a restored relationship except through Him and faced with Him men must decide whether they want forgiveness or not.

VI. THIRD PASSOVER. DELIVERANCE.

xi. to xx.

Perhaps the greatest theme of the Passover Festival was the idea of Deliverance. As we have seen, the Rabbis called the Feast the 'Festival of our Freedom'. Looking back to the days of the Exodus they rejoiced in God's deliverance. Looking forward they looked for the time when He would deliver them again.

John's third Passover brings his story to a climax. This is the season of Deliverance. They have already been told that if they do not respond to Him they will die in their sins. Now they are shown the alternative. There is one who can deliver them from that death.

Once again the message is summed up in a miracle. The raising of Lazarus is the climax of the 'signs'. This is deliverance from death. The four days of Lazarus' death signify that all hope of a natural restoration has gone. There is need for a new creative act of God. He is life. He that believes has life. Martha realises that she is in touch with God's manifestation of Himself - the Christ, the Son of God, He that should come. Life eternal - the forgiven life of fellowship with God is possessed here and now by those who respond to Him. Again the manifestation creates division - some believe and others report to the Pharisees, The Pattern is emphasised again.

The sign has revealed the supreme issue of life. Now it is stated in the form of a challenge in the Triumphal entry. This is Messianic testimony, the forcing of the supreme crisis upon man. John supplements the Synoptic story to bring out its meaning, a meaning which he says the disciples did not understand until Jesus was glorified. Then they remembered the word "Behold thy King cometh unto Thee". John uses the phrase 'King of Israel', his word for the new community distinguishing from 'The Jews'. Only John refers to the palm branches, the sign of His victory. The meaning of the symbolism is plain - 'You say you look for your King, your Deliverer - Here He is' - all depends on what men do when the King is here. The challenge is followed by a link with His death at which we shall have to look later. The voice from heaven and the troubling of Jesus represent John's account of the Transfiguration and Gethsemane. There is agony as real as Gethsemane as He pleads to be saved from this hour but it is in the moment of agony that the heavenly voice confirms his Mission.

The hour of crisis is now stated in words. It is a choice between judgment and salvation. The opportunity is here but it will pass. The word is 'Take it while you can'. Having said that, He departs and the ministry is closed. The result of the challenge is rejection. His comment is that they are blind of eye and hard of heart. The refusal to recognise Him is sin.

The evangelist cannot refrain from stating the issue once again as a climax to the ministry. Light has come to deliver men from darkness (xii.46). Rejection leads to judgment (xii.48) God's offer is eternal life and Jesus has offered the word of God (xii.50).

The Public Ministry has closed and now we see Jesus with His own, explaining things to them in the light of the Passover symbols. As the Gospel begins with water and wine so at the end we are brought back to them. 'If I wash Thee not thou hast no part with me'. This is the only way into the people of God. Having a part with Him means sharing in fellowship with God and with each other in the new family based on Him. The Vine was often used in the Old Testament as a figure of the Covenant people, but they were always regarded as a degenerate vine. He is the true - the genuine Vine. He is the founder of the new people of God who shall be not degenerate but in complete union with Christ in the forgiven life. This depends once again on love and obedience. The two Sacraments are here again. 'He that is bathed needeth not save to wash his feet'. There is only one baptism but there are travel stains to be removed in the constant renewing grace of the Eucharist. (cf. Cullman op cit 109)

He explains to them that the crisis is to be continued. His presence with them and the teaching they give will be a touchstone which will continue to judge men. Division and separation will continue wherever the message is preached. The world will love its own and it will hate them. If He had not come there would not have been sin because man would not have refused what He had not been offered. But it is sin and there is no excuse for it - they have been confronted with the manifestation and refused it.

He tells them that they will often fail themselves but their heart must not be troubled. They must believe - in God, in Him. If they will but believe - and it is in the sense we have investigated - they will be where He is. This is no mere promise that He will be with them. That is great enough. This is greater. He will take them where He is - in that perfect relation with the Father. This is deliverance indeed. And this is shown in the context of the Supper, merely another pointer to the communicating of Himself in the Eucharistic symbols. He does not show or point the way - He is the Way, the Way that unites two places. Union with Him is the way ~~to~~ God and there is no other way. All depends upon their continued response to Him. The vision of God is granted to those who have responded to the incarnate Son.

The great High Priestly Prayer makes clear that the offer of Eternal Life means one thing only - to know God and have the intimate fellowship with Him which was characteristic of the Son's relationship

to the Father. Is there any clearer statement of what forgiveness means than ~~that~~ ~~that~~? The offer is nothing less than to share in the perfect relationship which the Son shares with the Father. And in this prayer there is also the vision of the eternal crisis as He thinks of those who 'believe through their word'.

The story of the trial is told but there is little more to add. He has made the issue clear. They have been presented with God's offer and have refused it. 'We have no king but Caesar' is the final apostasy of the chosen people - the Covenant people of God. This is the Gospel of the rejection. There is nothing remaining but to send Him to Golgotha. He goes to the Cross. Men gamble for the seamless robe - the symbol of His priesthood to bring men and God together. The work is finished.

To complete the story of God's manifestation of Himself in Christ we are shown the great deliverance. He conquers death and makes Himself available for all time. He gives His final commission. 'Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them, and whosoever sins you retain, they are retained'. It is the commission to the eternal Crisis. Their task is to reproduce the pattern. They will make Christ real in their preaching to men and by their response men will once again be separated. The Church by making Christ real will judge men. The manifestation will be repeated in every age and men will be confronted with the same crisis - respond or reject.

The Gospel proper closes with a statement of its aim - to offer eternal life to those who believe. The offer of the forgiven life is here - and it depends upon believing in Christ.

VII. SUMMARY.

In our review of the Fourth Gospel certain things have become clear.

1. We have seen that the Pattern we traced in the Old Testament and the Jewish writings is repeated. It is stated with great clarity and emphasis in the introduction and maintained in prominence throughout. God manifests Himself and makes the offer of eternal life. The manifestation brings a crisis to which man must make some response. He must either believe or reject. The result of rejection is death. The result of belief is Life.
2. The whole pattern is centred in a Crisis. Wherever Jesus goes there is decision and separation. John is all the time picturing man in an existential situation in which he must do something. The note of KRISIS in its double sense of crisis and judgment dominates the Gospel. And this Crisis will be continued in the preaching of His disciples.
3. On almost every page of the Gospel sin is interpreted as the rejection of Jesus. It can even be said that John knows no other sin but this. The Gospel is an account of how man, confronted with God's Manifestation of Himself, rejected it and committed sin.
4. The word 'forgiveness' is not frequently used but the idea is there all the time. If forgiveness is a restored relationship - a restoration to an intimacy as though sin had never been - then the offer all through the Gospel is the offer of forgiveness.
5. Another feature has been prominent. John has taken the great Festivals of the Jewish life which were associated with the Temple and in each case has shown how the old is fulfilled and superseded.
 - a. Jesus is placed in the centre. He takes the place of all the Jewish ritual. The Covenant People no longer depends upon the Temple but upon Him. To belong to the People of God one must make a response to Him. The Passover as a Communion Sacrifice with God is no longer essential - for Communion with God there is only one Way and He is the Way. Light and Water, with all that they symbolise, come from Him. The promise and hope of the Messiah is fulfilled in Him. Deliverance is achieved by Him and by no-one else.

It has been pointed out that a feature of the Qumran Community was the rejection of the Temple and all that it stood for. It was, according to them, degenerate. Here we have the same feature but John gives the answer to the questionings of Qumran. He knows what must be placed instead of the Temple. It is not 'what' but 'who'. Everything depends upon man's attitude to Him. We shall look at the relationship with Qumran and the Dead Sea Scrolls later.

b. There is the constant emphasis in this Gospel on the New Covenant People of God, or as we have called it 'The New Family'. There is no longer any question of belonging to the family because of descent from Abraham or by being 'adopted' as a proselyte from outside. One enters the family only through response to Him and is 'born' into it by the Spirit which He gives. This is no formal family life but an intimacy with Him and with others as real as the intimacy of the Blessed Trinity.

c. The way of entry into the family is through an intensely personal crisis. A man must respond - must 'believe' in Him. It is belief in the sense of committal. This is no formal membership of a religious community. It is an individual personal decision when confronted by the supreme crisis of all existence. To John Christianity is a religion of personal crisis for every man.

d. The old Sacramental Symbols of the Old Covenant People are replaced by the new Sacramental Symbols of the New Family. The Temple, its sacrifices and its festivals, mediated the forgiveness and grace of God to the worshippers who belonged to the Old Covenant. They were the way to communion with God - the divinely ordained means of the Old Covenant. The new Sacramental symbols, ordained by Him, take their place. The forgiveness and grace of God are mediated to the members of the New Family through Baptism and the Eucharist. This is so because in the right use of these symbols man is making a response to Jesus.

6. Again and again there is also the indication that God's forgiveness is dependent upon the death of Christ. The relationship can only be restored at cost. The deliverance means a deliverance through blood. It is now necessary to examine the teaching of John on the subject of the Death of Jesus. How is forgiveness made possible for those who believe?

NOTE. THE ACCEPTED MISPLACEMENTS.

The reasons which to the present writer seem sufficient to merit accepting certain misplacements are briefly as follows:-

iii. 22-30. This passage in its present position interrupts the meditation following the interview with Nicodemus. The meditation is continued in vv 31-36 and this follows naturally from verse 21. If iii. 22-30 is placed after ii.12 it describes the progress of Jesus from Galilee to Jerusalem where He is in ii.13. The reference to the bride and bridegroom follows naturally after the Wedding Feast at Cana.

vi. seems an obvious misplacement. In chapter v. the scene is laid in Jerusalem where the cripple is healed. A discussion follows the healing and this is continued in vii.15-24. Chapter iv has closed in Galilee and chapter vi. suggests that Jesus is still in Galilee. We can hardly accept a visit to Jerusalem between chapters iv and vi. If vi is transposed to come between iv and v there is no need to find an explanation of the 'feast' in v.1. It is the Feast of Passover which according to vi.4 is at hand.

vii.15-24. Following this change we note that vii.19 'Why do you seek to kill Me?' seems to refer ^{to} v.18 where 'the Jews sought all the more to kill Him', and vii.21-24 seems to be a reply to the accusation of Sabbath breaking brought in v.16. If the passage vii.15-24 follows v.47 it not only meets these difficulties but vii.15 links on with v.47 naturally and vii.25 would be the natural reaction of the people of Jerusalem after the statement in vii.14 that He went up to the Temple and taught.

x. 19-29. 'There was a division among the Jews because of these words' (x.19) sounds irrelevant after the discourse on the Good Shepherd. It is very much in place after the discussion of ix.35-41. If it is replaced after ix.41 it leads on naturally to the Good Shepherd discourse which is connected with the Feast of Dedication.

xv. and xvi. The close of xiv is out of place ('let us go hence') if two chapters of discourse are to precede the prayer in xvii. If xv and xvi precede xiv this difficulty is avoided and the whole discourse is a better unity.

CHAPTER XI. THE DEATH OF JESUS AND THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS.

I. THE FACT OF JESUS'S DEATH.

II. THE NECESSITY OF JESUS'S DEATH

- A. The Purpose of God.
- B. The Fulfilment of the Purpose is described in sacrificial language.
- C. It consists in doing for other people that which they cannot do for themselves.
- D. It is connected with the taking away of sin.
- E. Its end is the creation of a New Family.

III. THE MEANING OF THE DEATH OF JESUS.

- A. Conflict and Victory.
- B. The two themes of Isaiah 53.
- C. The Lamb and the Shepherd.
 - i. The Lamb of God.
 - ii. The Shepherd
- D. Three Johannine Words.
 - i. Glorify.
 - ii. Lifted up.
 - iii. Propitiation.

IV. THE CRUCIFIXION.

- i. The seamless robe.
- ii. The hyssop.
- iii. He gave up His Spirit.
- iv. The water and the blood.

V. CONCLUSIONS.

CHAPTER 11. THE DEATH OF JESUS AND THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS.

In our consideration of the themes of sin and forgiveness in the Johannine writings we have already noticed many references to the death of Jesus. John's writings give us no ground for thinking that the death of Jesus is an isolated fact so far as forgiveness is concerned. The death of Jesus is a part, and a necessary part, of God's Manifestation of Himself. The Life, Death and Resurrection of Jesus are a single whole. We can isolate the Cross as a convenience for study but we must never assume that by itself it gives the whole answer. On the other hand, in the Johannine teaching, the Death of Jesus has a very real place in the scheme of man's salvation. It is essential to consider this place and John's teaching about it.

I. THE FACT OF JESUS'S DEATH.

John's Gospel and Epistles were written against a background which included many who doubted whether Jesus had died a real human death. Some even denied the reality of the Incarnation. The emphasis in the first Epistle seems especially directed at those who might be swayed by such teaching. The Docetists and such people as Cerinthus represented a very real danger. Hence the constant emphasis on the reality of the Incarnation in the First Epistle. There must be no doubt in the minds of Christians that God was really incarnate in Jesus and that God in Jesus died a real human death. This is partly the significance of the reference to Him that came by 'water and blood' (I.Jno.v.6.8.). It also accounts for the vividness of detail in the Crucifixion narrative and the otherwise unnecessary comment about the piercing of the side of Jesus. The story of the verification of Jesus's death by the sword thrust is not accounted sufficient so the testimony of an eye-witness who can vouch for the fact is appended (xix 34f). Jesus died a real human death.

II. THE NECESSITY OF JESUS'S DEATH.

St. John is one with the Synoptics in his portrayal of the death of Jesus as something which must be. The 'Son of Man must be lifted up'. (iii.14), the wheat must fall into the ground and die if it is to bear fruit (xii.24). When we ask the meaning of this 'must' the answer John gives is that it is ^a part of God's Purpose.

A. THE PURPOSE OF GOD.

The purpose of which the death of Jesus is a part is summed up in iii.16 'God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth should not perish but in Him have eternal life'. This theme is stated on other occasions and in other terms but it is a theme which runs through all the Johannine literature. The grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies in order that it may fulfil its purpose or

reason for existence which is to bear fruit (xi. 24-32). The frequent references to the 'hour' and the 'time' (xii.23. ii.4 vii.30 vii.6) suggest that something is working according to plan. 'The Father loves the Son because He lays down His life that He may take it again (x.17) and 'The Father hath sent the Son to be the Saviour of the World' (I.John iv.14). Here is deliberate purpose indeed.

This purpose, according to John, is no sudden thing. It is linked up with God's plan in history. Calvary is no sudden expedient to put things right that had gone wrong. In the story of the Crucifixion John gives us four quotations to show that this event has been planned and foreseen (xix.24,28,36,37). It is also to be noticed how the death of Jesus is linked on with the life of Jesus as part of God's purpose. At three points John makes a comment connecting with the death of Jesus sayings which originally did not refer to it. At the cleansing of the Temple when Jesus says 'Destroy this Temple and in three days I will raise it up' John adds 'He spake of the Temple of His body' (ii.21). Caiaphas' statement is interpreted as a prophecy that 'one man should die for the people' (xi.51) and after the reference to a lifting up that would draw all men to Himself John comments that He spoke thus 'signifying by what manner of death He should die' (xii.33). We are left in no doubt that the death of Jesus has its place in the eternal purpose of God. In it, as in everything to do with Jesus, God is taking the initiative to fulfil what He plans.

B. THE FULFILMENT OF THE PURPOSE IS DESCRIBED IN SACRIFICIAL LANGUAGE.

When John writes about the fulfilling of God's purpose in the death of Jesus he frequently uses terms which can only be understood against the background of the sacrificial system. The reference to the 'Lamb of God' (i.29) is a case in point and further examples can be seen in vi.53-6 (the need for eating His flesh) xii.24 (the grain of wheat) xv.1-10 (the allegory of the Vine) and xvii. 19 (For their sakes I sanctify myself).

C. THE PURPOSE CONSISTS IN DOING SOMETHING FOR OTHER PEOPLE WHICH THEY CANNOT DO FOR THEMSELVES.

The vicarious is never far away from John's thought. If the death of Jesus is part of God's purpose it is concerned with doing something on behalf of others. The Shepherd lays down his life for his sheep (x.11) and the one man dies 'for the people' (xi,50). This is implicit in the passage iii. 14-16 already quoted and xv.13 suggests that the greatest love which consists in laying down one's life for others is to be demonstrated on the Cross. The First Epistle is most explicit here, 'He laid down His life for us' (I.Jno.iii.16).

D. IT IS CONNECTED WITH THE TAKING AWAY OF SIN.

The act of doing something for others which they cannot do for themselves is connected with the taking away of sin. Jesus is

pointed out to the first disciples as the One who 'taketh away the sin of the world' (i.29). The First Epistle has this theme running through it from beginning to end. 'The blood of Jesus His Son cleanseth us from all sin' (i.7-9), 'He is the propitiation for our sins' (ii.7) 'He appeared to take away sin' (iii.5). God loved us and 'sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins' (iv.10).

E. ITS END IS THE CREATION OF A NEW FAMILY.

The ultimate aim of the purpose of God is to create a new family. This is John's emphasis throughout. Where Paul had expressed the purpose of salvation in terms of law and redemption from slavery, where he had grown near to the idea of the family in terms of 'adoption', John goes far beyond this. The new life consists not in being 'adopted' into an old family but in being born into an entirely new one. In so many of the references to the death of Jesus it is clear that this is in the forefront of his mind. Forgiveness meant not only a new relationship to God but a new family relationship with others.

We have already looked at the interview with Nicodemus. It is only necessary to note that the giving of God's Son is linked with the idea of the new birth. The connection cannot be accidental. Whosoever responds to the manifestation of God in Christ becomes a member of the new family - and this because God gave His Son.

The Good Shepherd lays down His life in order to bring those who are not of this fold with the ultimate aim of making 'one flock' (x.11).

We have already examined the passage in xii.24.32. The grain of wheat must die in order that it may fulfil its purpose of bearing fruit. This bearing of fruit is so as 'not to abide alone'. John follows this by saying Jesus spoke these words 'signifying by what manner of death He should die'. The manner of death is such as will draw all men and build the family so that He does not abide alone.

In the context of the Last Supper, when His death must have been uppermost in His mind, Jesus gives the basis of the new family. They are to love one another - not this time as one loves one's neighbour as oneself but 'as I have loved you'. A new bond greater than the love of neighbour is to be the sign by which men will recognise that they belong to Him. (xiii.31ff). He lays down His life 'for His friends' (xv.13) and says that they are His friends - the first members of the new family. He 'sanctifies Himself' for their sakes and has in mind those who 'shall believe through their word' (xvii.19).

It seems clear that in His reference to the building of the Temple and John's comment that 'He spake of the Temple of His body' (ii.21) that here again is the reference to the family. The usual implication is that Jesus was speaking of His death and His resurrection after three days. But this saying is in the context of the cleansing of the Temple. The old Body is to be replaced by a new

Body - the old Covenant people by a new Covenant People. Is it too far fetched to suggest that the 'temple of His body' is the new family which He will create?

There remains the unconscious prophecy of Caiphas. Caiphas prophesies that 'one man should die for the people' (x.51). When John comments on this he changes the word 'people' to 'nation' (x.52). (x.52). *τοῦ λαοῦ* would suggest that Caiphas had in mind the Jews. The change to *ἐθνους* suggests that according to John Jesus was to die for the members of the new family - the new nation of God including all those children of God who are scattered abroad that they might be gathered into one (xii.52).

ACCORDING TO JOHN therefore the death of Jesus was necessary in order to fulfil God's purpose of doing something for men which they could not do for themselves, namely the taking away of sin and the building of a new family.

III. THE MEANING OF THE DEATH OF JESUS.

A. CONFLICT AND VICTORY.

As we watch events unfold in the pages of John's Gospel we are very conscious that we are not merely seeing the processes of a judicial execution. The whole atmosphere of the Gospel is the atmosphere of conflict. John has, in common with the Synoptics and Paul but even more pronounced, a very real sense of the cosmic struggle. There is more in the coming of Jesus than the coming of a teacher to men and women. There is a decisive conflict with the powers of darkness. Behind human life there are impalpable forces which tear the universe and the soul of man apart. It is not enough to preach to men and women. The powers of darkness must be defeated. God's manifestation of Himself is not only to force a crisis upon men and women. 'The Son of God was manifested to destroy the works of the devil' (1 Jno.iii.8). 'The whole world lieth in the power of the evil one' (1 Jno.v.19). The 'prince of this world' (xiv.30) is a very real figure and the cross represents his defeat (xvi.11) 'Now is the judgment of this world; now shall the prince of this world be cast out' (xii.31).

'He transforms the idea of judgment. It becomes an activity, not a court. He does not pass sentence upon Satan. Satan falls because Christ is King. The cross is a crown and therefore the cause of crisis, a sceptre which decides the fate of evil' (V.Taylor 'The Cross of Christ', p.69).

The crisis then is not merely God facing man. It is the supreme crisis of God facing the Devil. There is a decisive conflict and the issue is victory - a victory won through suffering. This is apparent all through the Johannine literature. As an illustration the passage in xii.20-36 should be studied. This is the passage containing

the reference to the grain of wheat to which we have already referred. All the elements of John's message about the death of Jesus are found there. The Divine initiative and purpose is paramount 'For this cause came I to this hour'. He is the true grain of wheat who is about to die that He may bear fruit. God's Name is to be 'glorified' in what is to happen and this is the first note of victory. The conflict is to take place 'Now is the judgment (krisis) of this world; now shall the prince of this world be cast out'. When that has happened and He is lifted up from the earth He will draw all men unto Himself - this is the second note of victory, the end will be achieved, this is the fruit He will bear. The whole passage is set in its true perspective by John's comment 'this He said signifying by what manner of death He should die'.

The result of the conflict is to be victory over all that the New Testament means by evil, sin and death. It is a victory that can only be won through suffering. As a result of the victory the new family will be formed.

B. THE TWO THEMES OF ISAIAH. 53.

Victory through suffering would be no strange idea to the Gospel writer. There is no doubt that the early Church interpreted the work of Christ in terms of the Suffering Servant of Isaiah 53. The great theme of this particular Servant Song is the theme of victory through suffering - a victory over evil and sin. The elements we have seen expanded in John xii.20-36 are all present in Isaiah 53. The divine initiative is emphasised 'It pleased the Lord to bruise Him'. The Servant suffered and He suffered because of the sins and evil of other people. For their transgressions and iniquities he was bruised and stricken. The issue is the issue of victory and the bearing of fruit. The servant suffers and in being despised, rejected (surely a Johannine word!), stricken, he bears the fruit in that the sin is borne and his purpose fulfilled. He wins the victory - he is satisfied with the travail of his soul and he divides the spoil which is the victor's right. It is impossible to avoid the conclusion that John has Isaiah 53 very much in mind in his interpretation of the death of Jesus. The death of Jesus means a victory through suffering borne for others and it is a victory over sin.

C. THE LAMB AND THE SHEPHERD.

John portrays Jesus under two figures which are full of meaning for our purpose.

i. THE LAMB OF GOD.

It is clear that John i.29 is a combination of two references - to the Passover Lamb and the Suffering Servant of Isaiah 53. It is sometimes said that the Passover Lamb was not a sacrifice. That is

not so. As we have already pointed out a Lamb that had to be treated as the Passover Lamb was treated was undoubtedly a sacrifice. On the other hand it is perfectly true to say that the Passover Lamb as such did not take away sin. There are real difficulties of interpretation. We suggest however that certain things are very clear.

a. The Lamb was a sacrificial animal and the use of the term would inevitably call up sacrificial associations. Even in the Passover where the Lamb was not a sacrifice for sin it was certainly a sacrificial animal. The fact that the Lamb was used in the Sin-offering (Lev.iv.32-5) and that the offerer laid his hands upon it and thus transferred his sin to it before the sacrifice would make it inevitable that almost any use of the term 'lamb' would recall to mind the idea of sin.

b. The original Passover Lamb did accomplish a deliverance. The fact that doorposts were sprinkled with the lamb's blood meant that the angel of death passed by. The Passover Festival commemorated an occasion when the Hebrews were literally saved by the blood of a Lamb. Passover does stand for deliverance and when one considers the prominence that the Passover has in John's Gospel it seems very clear that i.29 has a Passover reference and the addition of the words 'that taketh away the sin of the world' imply that the deliverance is to be understood as a deliverance from sin. The dating of the Crucifixion at the time of the slaying of the Passover Lamb in the Temple and the reference in xix.36 to the breaking of the bones make it clear that John is identifying Jesus with the Passover Lamb. The term 'Lamb of God' means at least that through His death a deliverance is wrought and the evidence is clear that John meant a deliverance from sin.

c. We must also bear in mind that in the early Church's practise the Eucharist was a Passover meal shared in the family. It was thought of as being that and in the context of the Passover the death of Christ was set forth 'for the remission of sins'. At a very early date the death of Jesus was compared to the sacrifice of the Passover Lamb and connected with the remission of sins. Paul is explicit on this point in 1 Cor.v.7 'Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us'.

d. The connection of the death of Jesus with the Passover would immediately suggest the idea of the new family of God. As the first Passover Lamb made possible the Exodus with its greatest feature, the calling out of the Covenant people, so the reference to Jesus as the Passover Lamb would suggest the possibility of a new Exodus. The 'Lamb of God' was a term which would undoubtedly have reference to the founding of the new family. The fact that i.29 is spoken by the Baptist and in the atmosphere of Baptism connects the death of Jesus with entry into the new family.

e. It needs to be added that in the period between the Testaments the term 'Lamb' came to be used as a symbol for a conqueror. In the book of Enoch David is described as a 'horned Lamb' (I.89.45) and so is Judas Maccabaeus (I.90.6-17). At the time John was writing he must surely have been aware of this use of the symbol. The Lamb stood for victory (cf. Rev. xvii.14).

f. There is also a clear reference to Isaiah 53. The Lamb of Isaiah 53 did take away sin. Attempts have been made to show that Jesus did not think of Himself in terms of Isaiah's Suffering Servant (e.g. Hooker 'Jesus and the Servant'). We cannot agree with that position but whether that is so or not there is no doubt that the early Church thought of Him in that category. Philip took Isaiah 53 as his text when he preached Jesus to the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts viii.32-35) and 1 Pet.1.19 suggests a conception which links up with the Passover and the Suffering Servant. The Servant of Isaiah 53 suffered in order to 'bear the sins of many' and by its identification of Jesus with the Servant the early Church understood that His suffering did just that. Cullman reminds us (op cit.p.56) that the Aramaic words for 'lamb' and 'servant' are the same. If the phrase were originally spoken in Aramaic it could mean 'the servant of God' just as clearly as the 'Lamb of God'. Perhaps it is too much to base an argument on a matter of translation such as this. The fact is that Jesus was regarded by the early Church as 'Thy Holy Servant Jesus' (Acts iv.27. cf. iii.13,26, iv.30).

When we consider the foregoing the essential points would seem to be that first of all the Baptist points to Jesus as the One who 'takes away the sin of the world'. In doing so he uses sacrificial language implying that here is the culmination and replacement of the whole sacrificial system of the Old Testament. The clear references to the Passover and to Isaiah 53 proclaim the truth we have already seen above - a deliverance wrought through suffering. In Isaiah 53 we have already seen the emphasis on victory and there is no doubt that the Exodus, commemorated in the Passover, represented a victory. The use of 'Lamb' to suggest victory in the period between the Testaments supports the view that the Baptist is pointing to Jesus as the One who will win the victory through His death. The creation of the new family is a vital part of this conception.

ii. THE SHEPHERD.

We have already seen that in taking the figure of the Shepherd to describe Jesus John was using an Old Testament figure with a Messianic meaning. A difficulty does however seem to arise in x.11. The Good Shepherd lays down His life for the sheep. In all the many Old Testament references to the Shepherd there is no single one which suggests that he ever lays down his life for the sheep. The whole idea of course would be absurd in any pastoral

setting. If the shepherd lays down his life the way is open for either robber or wild animal to take the sheep and they are not saved. If a shepherd laid down his life he would fail the sheep. It was essential for their welfare that he should keep and not lose his life.

There is one place and one place only in the Old Testament where the sheep are saved by someone dying for them and that is in Isaiah 53. We are inevitably led back once again to what seems to be the heart of John's interpretation of the death of Jesus. The salvation or deliverance of the sheep is wrought by the laying down of life. Here again there is the clearest possible connection between the death of Jesus and human sin. 'All we like sheep have gone astray' is the word of Isaiah 53. John x. can only be understood against this background. The other sheep He must bring are those who will be drawn to Him when He is lifted up to die. The same elements are here that we saw in John xii and Isaiah 53. His is the initiative. He lays down His life because it is His power to do so. The result of His death is the bearing of fruit - the calling of the flock, the new family. It is all in the purpose of God. No man takes away His life. He lays it down of Himself. This command He has received from His Father.

D. THREE JOHANNINE WORDS.

John uses three words in referring to the death of Jesus which must be examined.

i. GLORIFY.

This word is most often used to describe the intimate relationship which exists between the members of the Trinity. The Son glorifies the Father and the Father glorifies the Son. The Spirit shall glorify the Son. (viii.54. xiv.13. xvi.14. xvii.1.4). This glorifying is on some occasions connected with the death and resurrection of Jesus e.g. xiii.31 Now is the Son of Man glorified and God is glorified in Him (cf. xii.28) Twice the expression is clearly used of the Resurrection and Ascension vii.39 'The Spirit was not yet given for Jesus was not yet glorified' and xii.16 'When Jesus was glorified then they remembered that these things were written of Him'.

The clearest references to His death are found in xii.23. xiii.31 and xvii.1.

The word is only used once of anyone apart from the Holy Trinity and that is in xxi.19 where it is used of Peter 'by what manner of death he should glorify God'.

An examination of the use of this term in the passages quoted suggests that the idea behind the word is that of triumph and it is a triumph that is linked with the 'hour' and the death. It is a triumph which is only shared by the intimate circle of the Godhead and yet xxi.19 suggests that it is possible for others to share it. Peter enters into the experience as the representative of the twelve. The triumph of the fellowship of the Godhead is the central theme. It is a triumph that others can share when they are brought into that same intimate fellowship He came to offer. The use of the term 'Glorify' certainly suggests victory and it is connected often enough with the references to His death to claim that it means victory through suffering. The end is the creation of the new family built on a relationship as intimate as that which exists between the members of the Blessed Trinity.

ii. LIFTED UP.

There are three references to the 'lifting up' of Jesus.

iii.14. 'As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness so must the Son of Man be lifted up'.

viii.28. When ye have lifted up the Son of Man' (spoken to the Jews).

xii.32. I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto myself.

An examination of these passages in their context reveals certain things about John's meaning. The first one occurs in the interview with Nicodemus. It is something which must happen in order that those who believe may have eternal life. The reference to the serpent in the wilderness suggests a deliverance for the serpent did deliver those who looked upon it. The second passage which refers not only to the 'lifting up' but to the people who shall do it - the Jews - points to His death. They will make Him suffer and afterwards they will realise the meaning of the manifestation 'When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am he, and that I do nothing on my own authority but speak thus as the Father taught me'. In the third passage there is a clear indication that 'lifting up' refers to His death. 'This spake He signifying by what manner of death He should die'. There is also the statement that when He is lifted up He will draw all men unto Himself.

The phrase therefore means the lifting up upon the cross which whilst it is in the purpose of God will be by the act of men. The result of the lifting up will fulfil God's purpose of deliverance and the deliverance will draw to Himself the new family.

iii. PROPITIATION.

In discussing this term we must have in mind our discussion of the term 'kipper' and its translation into Greek in our section on the Old Testament. There is a wide background of usage in which certain things stand out about *ἱλασμός* and its cognates.

In pagan usage the word means often 'to pacify', 'to appease', 'to propitiate' in the sense of buying off someone who has been wronged or offended. In the LXX use of the term it can mean that but not where it is used with reference to God. There are occasions of its use in the Old Testament in the LXX translation where the only meaning can be simply 'pardon' e.g. II.Ki.v.18 in the story of Naaman. Psalm lxxv.3. Psalm lxxviii.38. The reference here and elsewhere may be to reconciliation but not to placation. It is important to notice that the cognates used in the LXX where the meaning is propitiate (ἐξῆλθεν ὁ θυμὸς αὐτοῦ and ἐξῆλθεν ὁ θυμὸς αὐτοῦ) are not used in the New Testament. Attempts have been made to suggest the inner meaning of the term. Does it mean simply 'forgive' when used with reference to God? There is much to be said for this position. Does it mean as C. H. Dodd suggests (Moffatt.N.T. Johannine Epistles p.26) 'disinfect' i.e. to remove the taint of sin? It is quite possible that this is a correct interpretation of the term.

For our purposes it seems that a more fundamental meaning is the key to St. John's use of the term. The word, even in its pagan usage, means at heart - to remove something which breaks a relationship. If a man is pacified or expiated it means that something is done to alter a relationship. In the highest use of the term as equal to 'forgiveness' that is the root meaning. A man only forgives when something which has broken a relationship is removed. We would define the root meaning of ἐξῆλθεν ὁ θυμὸς αὐτοῦ therefore as 'to remove that which comes between'. We notice that John does not say that Jesus makes propitiation - He is the propitiation, in other words, He is the One who removes that which comes between man and God. (1 Jno.ii.2. iv.10).

We are taken a step further in 1 Jno.ii.1 and 2. Here the statement that He is the propitiation for our sins is linked with the fact that He is our Advocate with the Father. This Advocate with the Father is Jesus Christ the Righteous. The word used is Paraclete. Now literally a Paraclete was not used of someone who represented someone at a distance. The literal meaning of the word is 'someone who is called to the side of another'. The Paraclete stands beside someone. He does not represent them at a distance. When John says that He is our Paraclete with the Father he does not imply that we have a representative in the distant presence of God. He means that Christ stands beside us in the Presence of God. We have a place there because of Him - He has taken us 'to be where he is'. Here is the full meaning of forgiveness. Because of His life and death we have a place where He is in the presence of the Father. All that comes between has been removed and we are taken into the fellowship which He enjoyed with His Father before the world was.

Propitiation therefore stands for the removing of all that comes between us and God. When that is removed there is the way open for full fellowship with God in which He stands beside us.

IV. THE CRUCIFIXION.

Having reviewed the Johannine references to the death of Jesus we now turn to his account of the actual Crucifixion. The whole story is told in a matter of twenty verses (John xix.18-37). It is remarkable that in twenty verses we get no fewer than four quotations from the Old Testament. (xix.24. 28. 36. 37). Here is the quite clear purpose of showing that the death John is describing is part of the purpose of the Eternal God. Certain features of the account call for comment.

i. The seamless robe. Where the Synoptics are content to tell us that the soldiers 'parted His garments among them casting lots' - deciding what each should take, John alone tells us about the seamless robe. He goes into careful detail explaining that it 'was without seam, woven from top to bottom;'. It must not be torn so lots are cast for it. This description of the robe is the description of the robe worn by the High Priest in his official capacity. (cf. Josephus Ant.III.161). It is clearly a symbol of the priesthood of Jesus. A priest had one supreme function namely to bring man and God together. It was for that purpose that the High Priest went once a year into the most sacred place of all. John is undoubtedly suggesting that in what is happening Jesus is bringing men and God together. The emphasis on the robe which cannot be divided is also suggestive of the death of Christ bringing together the new family. 'There shall be one flock' because of the death of the one Shepherd.

ii. The Hyssop. The Synoptics record the giving of a drink but in each case they say it was put upon 'a reed'. Hyssop is a strange word to use and raises such difficulties that attempts have been made to support a variant reading which occurs in one MSS 'javelin'. To do this is to miss the purport of the writer. He would not be concerned that hyssop was not a suitable plant to use in these circumstances. He is concerned with the fact that in the original Passover experience blood sprinkled on hyssop was the means of deliverance (Exod.xii.22). There is here a clear allusion to the Passover - a theme which is in John's mind throughout the whole Gospel.

iii. He gave up His spirit. The word used here is unusual. The Synoptics use words which mean simply 'died' or 'expired'. John uses *παράδωκεν* which literally means to 'hand over'. Moulton and Milligan (Vocabulary of N.T.) give instances of the use of this word where it has its literal sense of handing over something or someone to someone else. There is no example of its use in connection with anyone's death. In vii.37-39 we are told that the Spirit is not yet given because Jesus is not yet 'glorified'. Hanging on the Cross is His glorification and in this moment He 'hands over' His Spirit to His disciples. C. K. Barrett (St. John) on this passage says that in view of Jno.xx.22 there is no room for an earlier giving

of the Spirit. We do not agree. We suggest that from the Cross in the moment of His glorification Jesus made the Spirit available for His Church and imparted it to the particular individuals in the post-resurrection experience of xx.22. Here we find an important feature of John's Crucifixion narrative which we find nowhere else. It is the theme of something being passed on - something which because of His triumph over death, death cannot destroy. It is the first hint of what is to be a vital part of His triumph.

iv. The Water and the Blood. The account of the piercing of the side of Jesus 'and at once there came out blood and water' (xx.34) is a very significant incident reported by John alone. To him it is so important that in order to make doubly sure its significance is understood he adds the testimony of an eye-witness. 'He who saw it has borne witness - his testimony is true, and he knows that he tells the truth' (R.S.V.). We have already suggested that part of the significance of this may be an especial emphasis upon the death of Jesus to counteract Docetic theories. It is hard to believe that that is its only meaning. Neither can we take very seriously attempts to prove from a medical point of view that water and blood could flow from such a piercing. We agree with C. H. Dodd (IFG 425) that 'the issue of water and blood is certainly a *συνέλευσις*'. It seems very clear that here is a reference to the two Sacraments which have been in John's mind throughout the Gospel. The early Church Fathers were undoubtedly under this impression and many were the different interpretations they drew from it. A full list can be found either in Westcott, St. John pp.284-6 or in Hoskyns (op cit) pp.534-5.

We notice that all John's previous references to blood and water have been significant. The references to water in iii.5. iv.14. vii.38 have all had reference to Baptism. The same can be said of the Feet washing in xiii. The reference to blood in vi.53 when it is stated that his blood must be drunk in order to have life clearly refers to the Eucharist. There is no doubt whatever in the present writer's mind that the blood and water flowing from the pierced side of Jesus represent the two Sacraments.

Cullman (op cit p.115) comments 'Scarcely is the historical Jesus dead - His body still hangs upon the Cross, when He shows in what form He will from now on be present on earth, in the Sacraments, in Baptism and the Lord's Supper'.

The historical Jesus corresponds to the Christ in the Church. He is still in the midst of the family He has created. The Church in its Sacramental life will continue to be in the presence of a manifestation of God. The Sacrament of Baptism will be His witness to the man who responds to the offer He makes. The Eucharist will be the witness of His Incarnation and Death. Perhaps there is more to it than that. In the Sacraments He will be present with His people

in exactly the same way as He was present with His own in the Upper Room. The Sacraments will have the same effect upon His followers as His Presence had upon those who responded to His call in the days of His flesh. Here again is something handed on - something released and made available by His death.

In the light of John's story of the Crucifixion we can understand the meaning of 1 Jno.v.6.8. In the days when John is writing there exist in the Church three who can bear witness - the Spirit, the Water and the Blood. When evil has done its worst it cannot take away from the new family the Spirit and the Presence of its Lord.

V. CONCLUSIONS.

Certain conclusions emerge from our consideration of the Johannine teaching about the death of Jesus. It must be said quite clearly that John gives us no material for the building up of a 'theory' of the Atonement as the word 'theory' is usually understood. We see a cosmic struggle and a defeat of the powers of evil. How that victory is wrought is not explained. In the nature of things it cannot be, not even by John. On the other hand John would be, as ever, much more concerned with the practical significance of the death and the victory and here he gives us his interpretation of the death of Jesus in its relevance for life.

The death of Jesus, according to John, is part of the Manifestation of God in Christ and an essential part. Once again the pattern of relationships is here and once again we are in the atmosphere of crisis. In fact, it can be said that the death of Jesus represents the supreme crisis of God's manifestation of Himself. The initiative throughout is God's initiative. Jesus lays down His life because that is the command He has received from the Father. It is part of the purpose, the purpose which included the birth and the life. God is in charge throughout and things are working 'according to plan'. We cannot get away from the fact that in the death of Jesus, as in His life, God is doing something.

The death of Jesus is not only part of the purpose of God, it is a necessary part. Why it is necessary we are not told. That is something which man cannot, as yet, know. It is a sacrifice - in the sense that sacrifice means doing something for others at a cost. The expression of the death in terms of the Passover and Isaiah 53 leave us in no doubt of the reality of the sacrifice or the cost it involved. Deliverance could only come this way.

The Cross is a conflict and it is a victory. Through His death Jesus won a victory by suffering over all that is meant by sin, death and evil. The cosmic struggle is fought and won. In winning the victory Jesus did something for men which they could not do for themselves. The result of that victory is that men can now be where He is, in perfect fellowship with the Father and members of the new family created in Him. This is forgiveness.

A good deal of this is the common teaching of the rest of the New Testament although nowhere else is the atmosphere of crisis so maintained. John however goes further and faces a most practical issue not only for the life of the Church but for the whole meaning of the Christian Faith. To say that Jesus won a victory over sin and death must mean that sin and death could not interfere with His purposes or separate Him from His own. The fact that Jesus Himself rose for the dead because 'He could not be holden of it' is great but it is not great enough for John. The Manifestation of God in Christ was real but it must go on. The victory must mean at least that sin and death, could not come between the Lord and His family.

When evil had done its worst it must have been unable to break the fellowship or remove the manifestation. In other words, victory to be complete must mean availability.

The crucial question therefore is - Is Christ who brings men into the experience of the forgiven life still available and if so, how? The rest of the New Testament writers face this issue and speak in terms of the 'living Christ' and the Spirit. John goes further. His answer is in the passing over of the Spirit and the water and the blood. Christ is still present in the Spirit but He is also present in a form that they can recognise in the water and the blood. The Light has shone in the darkness of this world. The forces of darkness massed against it at the Cross. But the darkness overcame it not. We see now even more clearly the significance of the tenses in John i. 5. 'The Light shines'. 'the darkness overcame it not'. The manifestation continues to be with men and the powers of darkness failed in their attempt to overcome it. All that He was in the days of His Incarnation He still is. All that He was is still available as men share His Spirit and partake of His Sacraments.

The Sacraments now become the manifestation of God. In them He is really present. As men come to the waters of Baptism and as they partake of the bread and wine of the Eucharist they come face to face with Him. The Eucharist is not therefore a memory of other days. Remembrance is obviously an essential part of it for who could do other than remember those Easter meals and the Upper Room on the night of His passion? But this is only secondary. The water and the blood released from the side of Jesus by the piercing of the sword mean that when men have pierced Him they cannot destroy Him. He is still there in a form that men can recognise. The primary thing about the Eucharist is that He is there and because He is there men are once again in an existential situation - face to face with the Lord.

Through the Sacraments therefore His forgiving grace is mediated to all who believe, that is to all who respond in the sense that they commit themselves to Him. He is still in the midst of the family - the new family He created. As men respond to Him they receive the forgiving grace that leads to eternal life, the life of complete fellowship with God. As men share that life they begin to share in nothing less than the intimate fellowship of the Triune God.

CHAPTER XII. ST. JOHN AND THE TEACHINGS OF QUMRAN.

I. THE ORIGIN AND TEACHINGS OF THE QUMRAN COMMUNITY.

1. Origin.
2. The Teaching of Qumran.
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 - a. Baths and Lustrations.
 - b. The Communal Meal.

II. ST. JOHN AND THE TEACHINGS OF QUMRAN.

1. Language.
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III. SIN AND FORGIVENESS IN THE QUMRAN TEACHING.

1. The Background Pattern.
2. Sin.
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IV. JOHN'S ANSWER TO QUMRAN.

CHAPTER XII. ST. JOHN AND THE TEACHINGS OF QUMRAN.

The discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls must be taken into account in all serious study of the Johannine writings. This is so for two reasons. In the first place there is a remarkable correspondence of ideas and even language between St. John's Gospel and Epistles on the one hand and such books as the Manual of Discipline on the other. In the second place the discoveries at Qumran have confirmed the existence of an unorthodox or non-conformist group within Judaism in the time of Christ and given us insight into the life and beliefs of such a group. Whether the Qumran Community must be identified with the Essenes of whom Josephus and Philo tell is a question which lies outside the scope of our present purpose.

Professor Cullmanⁿ has maintained for some time that there was in Palestine a Judaism which contained Hellenistic and other elements alongside the official Judaism of the Temple. In a recent article (Expository Times Oct./Nov.1959) he has developed this further, taking into account the Dead Sea Scrolls. Professor Cullman suggests that Stephen and the Hellenists of the Acts represent a group within Judaism which rejected the Temple and maintained that the Jews had always rejected the divine law. He connects this group with the mission to Samaria referred to in John iv because the Samaritans were the people who above all else rejected the Jerusalem Temple. He sees a link also with the Epistle to the Hebrews. If Cullman is right we have a non-conformist group or groups within Judaism which includes Stephen and the Hellenists, John and Hebrews together with such groups as Qumran. If this can be maintained it has obviously important results for all New Testament study.

Our immediate purpose is with the relationship between Qumran and the Gospel and Epistles we have been considering. We propose therefore first of all to review the teachings of Qumran in general and then consider the points of contact with St. John. Following that we must look at the meaning of Sin and Forgiveness as revealed in the Qumran writings. Finally we shall try to estimate the relationship between that and the message of John as we have seen it in the preceding pages.

I. THE ORIGIN AND TEACHINGS OF THE QUMRAN COMMUNITY.

1. Origin.

The origin of the Qumran Community is found in a group of people who realised that Judaism in general had been guilty of apostasy. They were a remnant who decided that the people as a whole had broken the Covenant and they determined to go into the desert to renew the Covenant with God. After twenty years God raised up a teacher of righteousness who taught them the true way of life. (CD i.1 to ii.12). He was given special insight into the purpose of God and was able to make known to them what God was going to do.

With those who listened to him 'God ever made good His everlasting Covenant with Israel, revealing to them the hidden things' (CD iii.12 cf. 1QpHab.i.13.ii.2). Those who disregarded him forfeited all hope of salvation (1QS ix.10f).

The appearance of this teacher was a sign that the present age was closing and the coming of the Messiah could not long be delayed. The Community therefore organised itself as a small Israel. They looked for the day when another teacher would come 'until such time as the true Expositor arrives at the end of days' (CD vi.11). Israel would then be gathered in under two Messiahs - the Messiahs of Aaron and Israel.

It is an open question as to whether the various references to the Teacher of Righteousness refer to the same person or a number of persons. It is however certain that they looked back to at least one teacher and they looked forward to the coming of another.

2. The Teaching of Qumran.

The basic teaching of the Qumran Community is stated clearly in the Manual of Discipline (1 QS). From God everything comes. He created man to rule over the earth. He designed two spirits for man in which to walk, the spirits of truth and deceit. The spirit of truth came from the well of light and is the source of all holy actions, pure worship and wisdom. The spirit of deceit came from the well of darkness. It is the source of all falsehood, desire, vileness, filthy worship, in fact all men's sins spring from here. There is a fierce struggle between the two but God has limited the time for the existence of the spirit of deceit and He will eventually destroy it. He will then purge a part of mankind 'with a spirit of truth like water', those whom He has chosen for His eternal Covenant.

Most of the teaching of Qumran is based upon Scripture. They accept the whole Jewish Law, Prophets and Writings and there are quotations from all these sections in the literature. The actual interpretation of the Scripture plays a large part in their life. The correct interpretation is supremely important. The men of Qumran considered that they were preparing the way of the Lord by their study and interpretation of the law. To enter the Community involved taking an oath to devote oneself entirely to the Law of Moses and at every hour of the day and night some members of the Community must be engaged in the study of the Law.

Fundamentally the Qumran point of view is that of official Judaism - devotion to the supremely important Law and regarding themselves as the chosen people of God. 'Obedience to the law, meant for the Covenanters a response to a divine revelation, not a revelation of truth to be believed but a revelation of duties to be done.....obedience was an expression of faith' (Millar Burrows. Dead Sea Scrolls. p.251).

The Qumran Community regarded themselves as the righteous Remnant of God (CD ii.14 to iii.20). Because they had been and continued to be faithful the Covenant of God with Israel had been confirmed and eventually the earth would be cleansed of guilt because of them. As such they were the Elect of God 'the witnesses of God's truth and the elect of His favour' (1QS viii.6. cf. 1QH ii.13). They claimed also to be Enlightened and walked 'according to the things which have been revealed' (1QS.i.9). They talk about bringing others to the 'inner vision' (1QS iii.13), and are called 'Sons of Light' (1QS iii.24.1QM.i.3).

Some have believed that Gnostic elements can be found in the teachings of Qumran. This is based chiefly on the dualism of the spirits and the emphasis on 'enlightenment' and knowledge. There may have been some syncretism. In view of the experiences of the Jews it would be hard to imagine otherwise. It is necessary to remember however that the dualism is not the usual Gnostic dualism of spirit and matter but rather of good and evil. Knowledge is not an enlightenment of some mystical 'reality' but of God's Law and purpose and the only meaning of knowledge is of something that must be obeyed. This kind of dualism and knowledge is thoroughly Old Testament and whatever Gnostic elements may have entered Qumran is certainly in line with the Old Testament Scriptures.

3. The Practice of Qumran.

Two elements in the practice of Qumran call for comment, the Baths and Lustrations and the Communal Meal.

a. Baths and Lustrations.

Baths and lustrations have a very special value in the practice of Qumran. There are regulations for their use (CD x.10-13) and there is reference to 'sanctification by immersion' (1QS iii.4-6). On the other hand they are regarded as meaningless unless they are accompanied by a turning to God and a willingness to walk in His ways. 'No one is to go into the water in order to attain the purity of holy man. For men cannot be purified except they repent of their evil' (1QS v.13). The Essenes, according to Josephus (Ant.xviii.1.5) had baths before each meal but there is no regulation which implies that this was true of Qumran. All that we can say is that lustrations were important provided they were accompanied by a turning to God.

b. The Communal Meal.

It is difficult to assess the position of the Communal Meal in the Qumran Community. It was obviously not an ordinary meal and it did have a certain significance. Places at the meal were regulated according to status (1QS ii.17-22). Novices and outsiders were not allowed to partake. The one presiding at the meal must be a priest and he must give the blessing, 'the priest is first to put forth his hand to invoke a blessing on the first portion of the bread or wine (1QS vi.4-6) 'No one is to reach for the bread and wine before the

priest, as he blesses the first portion of the bread and wine' (1Q Sa ii.18f).

It is clear that the Communal Meal is a religious exercise but nowhere is there any reference to suggest that it was regarded as a sign of the new Covenant or the confirmed Covenant. Perhaps we should regard it more as an experience of fellowship something like the early Christian agape. It is clearly important but its exact meaning is not easy to define.

This has been a very brief and obviously incomplete review of the beliefs and teachings of the Qumran Community. We have only been able to indicate what are the most important features from our particular point of view.

II. ST. JOHN AND THE TEACHINGS OF QUMRAN.

It is impossible to review completely the many points of contact between St. John and the teachings of the Qumran Community. All that can be done is to indicate certain ways in which correspondence is remarkable.

1. Language.

A few examples will show how close the correspondence of language often is. In the Manual of Discipline (1QS xi.11) we read 'By His knowledge everything happens...He fixed it by His design and nothing happens without His intervention'. John i.3 has 'All things were made by Him and without Him was not anything made that was made'. John of course is speaking not of a distant Deity but of the Word made flesh Whom he has seen.

The Manual of Discipline (1QS iii.20) 'In the hand of the Prince of Lights is the rule over all the Sons of righteousness and in the ways of light they walk'. When we compare with John viii.12 we have the same theme except that once again it is centred not in a distant 'prince of lights' but someone whom John has seen, 'I am the Light of the world. He who follows Me will not walk in darkness but will have the light of life'.

In the Manual of Discipline (1QS iv.20-22) we find 'Then God in His faithfulness will purify all the works of man and cleanse for himself the body of man, in order to consume every wicked spirit from the midst of his flesh, and to make him pure with a holy spirit for every wicked deed and he will sprinkle on him a spirit of truth like water for impurity...so as to give the righteous understanding in the knowledge of the Most High'. The correspondence with Jno.iii.5 'Unless a man be born of water and of the Spirit he cannot see the Kingdom of God' is striking.

There are other, many other, passages which could be quoted. The correspondence of language is remarkable. It is not easy to account for it. The fact that common thought forms are used is surely not enough to account for verbal similarities to such a remarkable degree.

2. Ideas.

When we turn from the actual language to the ideas which dominate the writings we find many thoughts and symbols common to the two literatures we are considering. What has been described as 'modified Dualism' is a case in point. Both John and Qumran see the world divided between two great forces and use the same words to describe them. There is Light and Darkness, Truth and Error, Spirit and Flesh. Men are either Sons of Light or Sons of Darkness. We can account for this only by saying that both John and Qumran are in the true line from the Old Testament. Whatever Iranian and other influences might have done it is not difficult to see how conceptions such as Light and Darkness came into Judaism. The nation had been in Exile and the later writings of the Old Testament are full of the influences of the Exile. When we remember that not all the people returned but remained as Jews in an alien land it is easy to see how later their influence may have brought in many ideas. As we have already said the dualism is of good and evil and the symbols with which it is expressed are not difficult to trace.

Apart from the Dualism there is a common emphasis on 'knowledge' but in John as in Qumran the Knowledge is of God and His Will and not of a vague mystical reality. This again is found in the Old Testament especially in the Wisdom literature.

We notice also a common rejection of the Temple. Whereas Qumran turns from official Judaism because it has been faithless John places Jesus in place of the Temple. There is a common emphasis on water and on the sacred meal.

Much of this common material can be accounted for quite easily. Both John and Qumran are in the true line from the Judaism of the Old Testament. It would be more surprising if there were not points of contact. Both John and Qumran are writing in a world which has thought forms and expressions which they both use. Although Qumran had ceased to be before John wrote his Gospel it was nevertheless part of the same world. If Qumran was a typical unorthodox or nonconformist group of Judaism its teachings must have been well known and John's Gospel suggests that he had many sympathies with them.

On the other hand the present writer doubts if all this is enough to explain the close correspondence of ideas and language. This correspondence is so close at times that it seems almost to be deliberate.

Can it be that John was familiar with the various groups of nonconformists Jews and with their literature? Can it be that he was writing all the time with one part of his mind on them? These were Jews who were dissatisfied with Judaism as it stood. They would be a mission field ripe for the harvesting. Does the query 'Art thou the prophet that should come into the world?' (Jno.vi.14) have in mind the new teacher of righteousness, the true Expositor, whom Qumran looked for at the end of the days? The correspondence of ideas and language makes such an answer not impossible.

III. SIN AND FORGIVENESS IN THE QUMRAN TEACHING.

1. THE BACKGROUND PATTERN.

The teaching of Qumran on the subject of Sin and its Forgiveness is once again against the background Pattern of the Old Testament. This is not surprising in a Community which based its life upon the Jewish Scriptures. We see the crisis for this group in the coming of the teacher of righteousness. He comes from God. He is not a manifestation of God in the sense that he is God confronting man but he comes to manifest God's will to the community by showing them how to interpret the Scriptures. The fact of his coming from God creates a crisis and they must choose as to whether they will follow his guidance or not. Those who do follow receive the enlightenment. Those who disregard him forfeit all hope of salvation.

Under the guidance of the teacher men come to know the will of God. Life for the community consists in responding to that, in other words in obedience to the revealed will of God. God has given them guidance, He has chosen them to confirm His Covenant. They make the response of obedience and those who obey are His elect.

'All those who devote themselves to do the ordinances of God shall be brought into the Covenant of mercy for the community' (1QS.i.7). They are 'sanctified by obedience to teaching, to walk before him perfectly in all things that are revealed' (1QS.i.8.9). This obedience includes good works 'these are their ways on earth; to illuminate the heart of man and to level before him all the ways of righteousness, of truth, and to make his heart fear God's statutes. A spirit of humility and patience, of great compassion and constant goodness, of prudence, insight and wonderful wisdom, which is firmly established in all God's secrets, leaning on His great mercy' (1QS iv.2.3).

Those who come into the Community are to bring with them all their mind, strength and wealth' so that their minds may be purified by the truth of His precepts, their strength controlled by His perfect ways, and their wealth disposed in accordance with His just design' (1QS.i.12.13). All this and indeed all their life is 'to the end that he may perform at all times the will of God which has been revealed as pertinent to this or that occasion' (1QS ix.13).

In the Damascus or Zadokite Document we are given a long list of the ways in which a member of the Community will obey the will of God and keep the Covenant in all its details (CD vi and vii) and all the teaching can be summed up in the words 'in all his emprises and in all things over which he has control he is to act in a manner acceptable to God, in accordance with what God has commanded' (1QS.ix.24).

2. SIN.

There is no doctrine of Original Sin in the teachings of Qumran. Man is a sinner because he submits to the evil impulses of his heart and in the last resort the origin of sin is found in the promptings of the angel or spirit of darkness 'By the angel of darkness comes the aberration of all the sons of righteousness, and all their sins, their offences, their guilt, and their iniquitous deeds are caused by his reign' (1QS.iii.22).

Man is regarded continually as a sinner in need of the grace of God. This is especially prominent in the Thanksgiving Hymns of the Community.

'Thine, O Thou who art the God of Knowledge,
are all works of righteousness, the counsel of truth
but to the sons of man belong the service of iniquity
and works of deceit' (1QH.I i.21f).

'For man lives in iniquity from the womb
and in faithless guilt to old age
I know that righteousness does not belong to a man,
nor to a son of man blamelessness of conduct.
To the most High God belong all works of righteousness
A man's way is not established
except by the spirit which God created for him
to make blameless a way for the sons of man' (1QH.vii.iv).

The Manual of Discipline is just as emphatic 'through the taint of his idolatry and through the stumbling block of his iniquity he has defected from God' (1QS ii.18).

When we ask in what sin consists the Qumran literature has no hesitation in saying 'Disobedience'. This disobedience consists in the rejection of God's revealed will and rebellion against His Covenant.

'We have acted perversely, we have transgressed, we have sinned, we have done wickedly, ourselves and our fathers before us, in that we have gone counter to the truth and God has been right to bring His judgment upon us and upon our fathers' (1QS.ii.16).

'in so much as his soul has revolted at the discipline entailed in a knowledge of God's righteous judgments.....he cannot be reckoned with the upright' (1QS.iii.1).

'Unclean, unclean he remains so long as he rejects the government of God and refuses the discipline of communion with Him' (1QS.iii.6).

The Damascus Document also emphasises the meaning of sin as disobedience and rejection of God's Will as do the Thanksgiving Hymns.

'Because they walked in the stubbornness of their hearts, the watchers of heaven fell, yea, they were caught thereby because they kept not the commandments of God.

So too their sons, whose height was like the lofty cedars and whose bodies were as mountains. They also fell.

So too, 'all flesh that was upon the dry land'. They also perished. These became as though they had never been, because they did their own pleasure and kept not the commandments of their Maker. In the end His anger was kindled against them'. (CD.ii./iii).

'They did not heed thy instruction
They did not listen to Thy word' (1QH.VII iv.).

3. FORGIVENESS.

There is certainly the promise of forgiveness in the teaching of Qumran.

'By His righteousness my sin is wiped out' (1QS.xi.3).

'In His righteousness He pronounces me clean of impurity of man and sin of mankind in order that I should praise God for His righteousness and the Most High for His glory' (1QS.xi.14).

Forgiveness is according to the free grace of God

'Thou hast purified the perverse spirit of a great sin, to stand in his place with the army of the holy ones and to come together with the congregation of the sons of heaven' (1QH.VI.iii.19f).

When we examine this doctrine however we find that it is limited to the elect. It depends upon repentance and obedience but the grace of repentance is given only to those who are chosen by God. There is no message of forgiveness for everyone. The elect are able to repent and to keep the Law because they have been placed under the dominion of the Spirit of Light.

How then do the elect receive forgiveness? The answer is by repentance and the faithful study and observance of the Law.

'It is by the holy spirit of the community in His truth that he can be cleansed from all his sins. It is by an upright and humble spirit that his sin can be atoned. It is by humiliating himself under all God's ordinances that his flesh can be cleansed by sprinkling with water of purification and by sanctifying himself with water of purity' (1QS.iii.7.8).

Repentance is absolutely essential. 'They cannot be cleansed unless they turn away from their wickedness' (1QS.v.14). Repentance must be followed by obedience 'Unclean shall he be so long as he rejects the ordinances of God and yields not himself to the discipline of the community of His counsel' (1QS.iii.4-6. cf.iii.8.9). The same message regarding forgiveness is found in the Damascus Document

'These were the 'holy men' of former times - the men whose sins God pardoned, who knew right for right and wrong for wrong. But all who up to the present time have succeeded them in carrying out explicitly the Law from which those ancients drew their lessons, them too will God forgive, in accordance with the Covenant which He made with those ancients to forgive their iniquities' (CD iv.6-12).

It will be seen that once a man belongs to the elect his forgiveness depends upon his own efforts. If he repents for his sin and studies the Law in order to render obedience to it, if he submits to the discipline of the Community, then he can gain forgiveness. There is no suggestion whatever of any atonement. All that has to be done to put the relationship with God right has to be done by man himself. Qumran has taken away the Temple and its services and put nothing in its place. It is the message of the Old Testament without the means which God provided for oneness to be restored and kept. There is no 'means of grace' unless the study of the Law be regarded as such. The Lustral Washings and the Communal Meal are important but there is no suggestion that they have saving efficacy.

There is a curious suggestion however that the community and especially the priests or 'holy ones' can atone for the members of the community and for 'the earth'. 'The priests shall atone for those who devote themselves and join the community' (1QS.v.6). 'The members of the community will be in all justice the witnesses of God's truth, the elect of His favour, effecting atonement for the earth and ensuring the requital of the wicked' (1QS.viii.10).

In the section of the Manual of Discipline regarding the appointment of presbyters there is the statement,

'When these things obtain in Israel, as defined by these provisions, the Holy Spirit will indeed rest on a sound foundation; truth will be evinced perpetually; the guilt of transgression and the perfidy of sin will be shriven; and atonement will be made for the earth more effectively than by any flesh of burnt offerings or fat of sacrifices' (1QS.ix.4). It is only right to point out that

Cullman is not sure that the last sentence of this passage should be translated so - he suggests the translation should be 'Expiation is assured through the flesh of holocausts and the fats of sacrifice' (Ex.Times. Nov.1959 p.39). This would accept sacrifices in principle but does not affect our conclusions. The Qumran community were away from the sacrifices of the Temple by their own choice and therefore did not consider them essential.

It is not clear just what the 'effecting atonement for the earth' means. It certainly does not mean for everybody.

We see therefore that for the Qumran Community forgiveness is dependent first of all upon being one of the elect and thereafter on one's own efforts within the community to study and obey the Law.

4. THE COMMUNITY.

Throughout the teaching we have been discussing there is a constant emphasis on the community. In order to do God's will, in order to find forgiveness a man must join the community. The idea played a central part in the thinking and practical living of the Qumran remnant. This of course was to be expected of a company of people regarding themselves as the true remnant of Israel. We see this emphasis again and again. They are 'set apart as a sanctuary consisting of Aaron, of the community as a Holiest of Holy and a house of community consisting of Israel who walk in integrity' (1QS.ix.6). Having separated themselves from the men of deceit (1QS.v.2) 'they shall be a community with Torah study and property, submitting response to the sons of Zadok, the priests who keep the Covenant' (ibid v.3). The object is stated to be 'that every man in Israel may be made aware of his status in the community of God in the sense of the ideal, eternal society' (1QS.ii.22). The aim is 'to bring into a bond of mutual love all who have declared their willingness to carry out the statutes of God; to join the formal community of God' (i.8.9). 'They are to unite in a bond indissoluble for ever' (v.5).

The Forgiven life consists not only in a new relationship with God but in a relationship of 'mutual love' with ones fellow members of the community. The ideal to which they strove is summed up in the Damascus Document thus,

'All of them will thus be members of a community founded at once upon true values and upon a becoming sense of humility, upon charity and mutual fairness - members of a society truly hallowed, partners in an everlasting communion' (CD 24-5).

We have already seen the close correspondence between the language and ideas of the Fourth Gospel and the Teachings of Qumran. Having now reviewed the teaching of Qumran on sin and its forgiveness we cannot avoid the position that John was writing with Qumran very much in mind. He must have been familiar with their teachings. He must have known how many of these groups were discontented with official Judaism. He must have known that he had the answer for which they were seeking. To say that John was writing to give the answer to Qumran and to similar groups is simply to recognise the way in which at almost every point John does just this. Such a position explains the seemingly deliberate use of language, it explains the strong emphasis on water and the common meal which the Fourth Gospel contains, and it may be that John's claim that 'He giveth not the Holy Spirit by measure' may have reference to the strong 'election' doctrine of Qumran.

When we acknowledge the nobility of much of the Qumran literature we have to say that it is probably weakest on the doctrine of forgiveness. To a man who needs to be reconciled to God the only word is 'Study and Obey'. There is nothing outside himself on which he can depend. There is nothing whatever for a man who just cannot obey by himself. The sacrificial system which brought the sense of forgiveness to so many Hebrews in preceding centuries is no longer acceptable. All that is left is the community's teaching on the Law. Over against this John centres everything on a Person. The challenge is to believe in Him - that is, to commit one's life to Him. In Qumran man is confronted with a Law - in John he is confronted with a Person.

The member of the Qumran community shared with the Christian the sense of evil in the world. Qumran however looked forward to the day when God would destroy the Spirit of Darkness 'At the time fixed for visitation He will destroy it for ever and then the truth of the earth will appear for ever' (1QS iv.19). According to John this has already happened. 'The Light shines in the darkness' (present tense) (Jno.i.5). 'The darkness is passing away and the true light is already shining' (1 Jno.ii.8). The power of evil has already been broken and one can share the victory now. Because of what has happened things can never be the same again.

The teachers of Qumran are constantly striving after a community which shall be built in mutual love, the new chosen people. Here again John can point to such a Community in existence, the true new Israel. The one way in which people can recognise that they are the disciples of Jesus is that they have love one for another, it is the badge of His service. (Jno.xiii.35).

The Qumran Community looked back to the teacher of righteousness who first interpreted to it the will of God. It looked

forward to the 'true expositor' who was to come. John could tell of someone who was with them now. Belief in Christ, that is, committal to Him that brought the consciousness of the Spirit which He had passed on to them from the Cross. As they shared in their common meal, the Eucharist, they knew that Someone was sharing it with them. He could speak of something which had happened but also of something which went on. Where Qumran was hoping for something and preparing for something John was conscious of possessing something.

Karl Schubert has said 'The Gospel of John and the Johannine letters can be understood in the broadest sense of the word as a coming to grips with the theological presuppositions of the Qumran Essenes. One frequently has the impression that a Christology for Essenes is being presented here' (The Dead Sea Community pp.151/2). It is not however a mere coming to grips with theological presuppositions. It is rather a matter of presenting to the non-conformist groups of Judaism the manifestation of God in Christ. As he speaks of the life and death of Jesus, as he describes the new family Jesus has created, as he shows the meaning of Sacramental fellowship with Him, he presents them with the crisis upon which everything depends. 'These things are written that ye might believe and believing have life in His Name' (Jno.xx.31). When the manifestation has been presented there is something to do - Believe. Here as always John is placing his readers in an existential situation. They must do something and destiny depends upon what they do.

CHAPTER XIII. CONCLUSIONS.

We set out with the purpose of investigating the apparent absence of the themes of Sin and Forgiveness in the Johannine writings. Our enquiry has shown that far from being absent they form one of the dominant themes of the Gospel. We claim however that our investigation has revealed much more than this. It has shown that the themes of Sin and Forgiveness are presented in a distinctly Johannine way.

We found in our study of the Old Testament that there was a distinctive 'Pattern of Man's Salvation'. Whilst the Spirit of God can never be confined to any pattern, the normal working of that Spirit seemed to be in a certain way. Sin and Forgiveness are set in a context of relationships. The Living God confronts man with a Manifestation of Himself. This manifestation immediately produces a crisis for God confronts man with an offer and a demand. Man must do something. If he rejects the demand he commits sin. If he responds with repentance and obedience he experiences forgiveness. This leads to the forgiven life of fellowship with God and membership of God's Covenant People.

The first distinctive feature of the Johannine interpretation of Jesus is that this pattern is clearly revived and sin and forgiveness are once again set in a context of relationships. In Jesus the Living God is confronting man in an existential situation. He confronts man with an offer and a demand. The offer is of a new relationship with God, the forgiven life, summed up in such concepts as 'Eternal Life' and 'Knowledge of God'. He offers to take man where He is, in perfect fellowship with the Father, in as close a relationship as that which exists in the Godhead. Man is offered the possibility of sharing in the very life of God. This confrontation immediately forces a crisis upon man and John's Gospel is above all else a Gospel of crisis. Man must do something in the situation in which he is placed. His attitude to Jesus is either response or rejection. Sin is construed as above all else the rejection of the Manifestation of God in Christ. Forgiveness is offered to the man who responds with 'Belief' in its Johannine sense of committal, trust and obedience. This forgiveness brings man into a new relationship with God and gives him also a place in the new family, the new Covenant People of God. The unique Johannine contribution is the setting of all this in its Old Testament pattern and the constant emphasis on the crisis of confrontation. Wherever Jesus goes there is crisis and separation. Men either reject or respond. They must do one or the other.

We also see that in repeating the Old Testament pattern John is deliberately replacing the old with the new. In our study of the Old Testament we saw how the Hebrew regarded the Law as the Manifestation of God. Alongside the Law as the basis of the Covenant People were the Temple and Sacrifices as the Sacraments of the Old Covenant. The purpose of the Temple and its Festivals, of the whole sacrificial system was to make possible communion with God and to restore that

communion when it had been broken by man's sin. The purpose of the sacrificial system was reconciliation with God and the making possible of the forgiven life. In place of the Law and the Temple John puts Jesus. He is the 'Way, the Truth and the Life' and no one comes to the Father except through Him. Jesus and not the Law is the basis for fellowship with God. It is in Him that the new family is born. He is the One who makes deliverance possible. He is Light and Water and Messiah and fulfils all that those terms mean. John deliberately takes the great Festivals of the Jewish Year and the Sacraments of the old Covenant and replaces them by Jesus. The Sacrifices which were the Sacraments of the Old Covenant through which the grace and forgiveness of God were mediated are replaced by the Sacraments of the new Covenant. From response to Jesus in the crisis of confrontation springs a new Covenant people, a new family, with new Sacraments to mediate God's Grace. Thus to John, Jesus is not only the fulfilment of the past, He completely replaces it. Man has not to obey a law or partake in a ritual, he has to make a response in the crisis of confrontation by Jesus. Everything depends upon that.

Nor does John leave us here. He is concerned to show that the pattern is constantly repeated. The crisis did not end when Jesus in His flesh no longer confronted men. There is a crisis that goes on to the end of history. This crisis takes two forms.

a. The preaching of the Word.

The commission of Jesus to the disciples is a commission to repeat the crisis. By making Christ real in their preaching they will again confront men with Jesus. Again men will be placed in a situation in which they must do something. As He speaks to them in the Upper Room he tells them that they will receive the same treatment as He has received for a 'servant is not above His Master'. He then says in the very next sentence 'If I had not come and spoken unto them, they would not have sin; but now they have no excuse for their sin'. The clear implication is that the disciples too will present men with the great crisis. In order that this might happen He promises the Spirit who will 'convince the world of sin, because they do not believe' and that Spirit He 'hands over' from His Cross. The issue again will be sin and forgiveness wherever the word is preached. 'If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained'. In His High Priestly prayer Jesus thinks of those who will 'believe through their word'.

As the disciples preach the word men will once again be confronted with a manifestation of God. They will have to decide whether to reject or respond. In this sense the very Gospel itself is regarded as being a Manifestation of God creating a crisis 'These things are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His Name'. Wherever the word is preached the Living God manifests Himself to men. The crisis of decision goes on.

b. The Sacramental Life of the Church.

We have already seen the significance of the piercing of the side of Jesus in John's story of the Crucifixion. The 'water and the blood' which poured forth from His side represent His continuing Presence in the Sacraments of the Church. Lest it be thought that too much should not be based upon a single text we remind ourselves that the Fourth Gospel is sacramental throughout. Again and again we have noted references which can only be to the new Sacraments which replaced the old. The old sacrifices were regarded as the mediators of God's grace to man. The deliberate supersession of the old by the new against that background has implications which cannot be mistaken. The Sacraments of the Church become the continued manifestation of God in the new family. In the Sacrament of Baptism the Christian is confronted with his Lord and commits himself to Him. The Manifestation is repeated every time the bread and wine is taken. This is no mere memory of the past however wonderful that past might have been. Christ is once again confronting man. There is the offer of forgiveness once again if man will respond with trust and committal and obedience. Every Eucharist is a crisis as men are face to face with Him. And forgiveness, grace, the new life are mediated to men as they partake of the sacramental symbols. 'Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood you have no life in you'. In the Eucharist men appropriate His life and death and all that they mean. As they assimilate Him they begin to appropriate the very life of God.

This again is unique in John. The crisis goes on. God is still a Living God confronting man with Himself and forcing a crisis upon him.

In Baptism a man enters the new family of God and in the Eucharist Jesus will be in the midst of His family again. As they respond to Him and partake of the Eucharist He will build them together in every age, the new family of God, for these symbols are the symbols that bind the Church of all ages and all places into a true unity.

The Pattern of Man's Salvation is thus repeated in every age. The man who hears the word and sees the Sacraments is confronted with a crisis to which he must react. No man can hear the word and go away from the hearing quite the same. He is either better or worse, nearer to God or farther away, according to the response he has made. No man can face the Sacraments and be quite the same again. The Johannine view of life is of a constantly repeated crisis. There is always judgment and separation. 'This is the judgment that Light is come into the world'. To reject the Manifestation of the Living God is still the supreme and only sin. But the man who hears the word and responds meets His Lord in every Eucharist and through the sacred elements receives forgiveness and appropriates the life of God and is built more and more closely into the new family. Such we claim to be the distinctive Johannine doctrine of Sin and Forgiveness.

It only remains to add a more tentative conclusion. Our investigation has revealed once again the thoroughly Jewish background of the Johannine writings. That is amply confirmed by the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls. The predominance of the Old Testament, the parallels with the teachings of the Rabbis and Qumran leave one in no doubt that John is writing in Jewish language and using Jewish concepts for by far the greater part of his time. We have already suggested the possibility that John was not only writing out of a Jewish background but with a certain kind of Jew particularly in mind. Qumran was one group but probably there were many more. They were Jews who had turned away from official Judaism because they felt it was not true to its mission. They had repudiated the Temple and its sacrifices, the symbols of the old Covenant. They proclaimed obedience to the Law as interpreted by the Community and practised their discipline with lustrations and a common meal. They had turned away from the Temple and its sacrifices but had nothing to put in its place for the lustrations and the common meal do not seem to have had atoning efficacy. John repudiates the Temple but in its place he puts Jesus. John turns his back on the sacrifices but replaces them with the Christian Sacraments. John puts faith in Christ in place of obedience to the Law. As we have already seen he seems almost deliberately to be giving the answers to the questionings of groups like Qumran. We suggest tentatively therefore that John had in mind particularly in writing his Gospel the Jews who were discontented with the old but had found no final answer to their longings. They still looked for one who should come. To them he proclaimed that He had come and that life and destiny depended upon one's response to Him.

Whoever the original constituents were the message of the Gospel is one for all time. It is distinctive in that it presents the Living God creating a crisis wherever the Gospel is read or the word is preached. So long as the word is preached and Sacraments celebrated man will be in the presence of a manifestation of the Living God in Christ. That manifestation always creates a crisis and man's destiny depends upon the response he makes.

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